

FIGHT RACISM!

FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

ANTI-IMPERIALIST PAPER OF THE
REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST GROUP

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SOUTH AFRICA: THE FLAMES OF REVOLUTION

SASOL oil plants destroyed by fire on 2 June. The spectacular result of the ANC's brilliant military operation against the racist apartheid regime.

The flames of revolution are once again engulfing the racist apartheid state in South Africa. On the 20th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, on the 4th anniversary of the Soweto uprising, the South African racist state is again being challenged by a massive and powerful revolutionary assault.

In FRFI 3 we hailed the victory of ZANU and ZAPU saying that it would give enormous impetus to the struggle against the racist South African regime. And today, inspired by the victory in Zimbabwe, the revolutionary black masses are doing battle for democracy and freedom against the blood sucking racist state and its imperialist backers, of which British imperialism is the main one. The black student's struggles, the spectacular ANC(SA) military operation against SASOL, the long and bitter workers' strikes and the uprising of Capetown blacks on 17 June brings the revolutionary movement in South Africa to a new and higher stage.

One year ago, in June 1979, we wrote:

'The magnificent struggles of the South African blacks, at its height during the Soweto uprising, is now simmering again beneath the surface as the South African racist state backed by British imperialism, intensifies its brutal oppression. But the courage and example of ANC freedom fighters like Solomon Mahlangu, murdered recently by the South African racist regime will not go unavenged. The ANC(SA) has now stepped up its activities in South Africa itself - the armed struggle will intensify.'

On Monday 2 June, units of Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the armed wing of the ANC, struck a brilliant and devastating blow against the apartheid racist state. Three SASOL oil-from-coal plants were bombed causing £5m damage. The enormous significance of the operation is more than the damage and humiliation it caused the racists and imperialists. Despite incredible difficulties, despite the vast state security apparatus, the ANC guerilla fighters penetrated these high-security plants, vital for the regime, executed the mission and retreated without casualty! There is no better evidence of the military calibre of the ANC army. There is no better evidence of the mass support enjoyed by the ANC. Planning, organising and executing such a mission would not otherwise be possible. The

racists and imperialists now stand in terror of the further blows. This operation, the biggest so far, follows the steady build up of the ANC's armed struggle which will now increase in scale, intensity and success. Neither the terror machine of the apartheid state, nor the arrest, torture and murder of ANC freedom fighters will shield the racists and imperialists from further and more damaging blows.

The words of Nelson Mandela, written two years ago are fitting for the new phase of the revolutionary struggle.

'Between the anvil of united mass action and the hammer of the armed struggle we shall crush apartheid and white minority racist rule.'

The Umkhonto we Sizwe operation came in the midst of the tremendous student struggles. Since April 1980, the apartheid state has faced wave after wave of student battles against racist education and against the whole racist capitalist system. From Cape Town to Port Elizabeth, from Johannesburg to Bloemfontein, from Durban to Pretoria hundreds of thousands of students have boycotted their schools, organised mass protest meetings and mass demonstrations declaring:

'Don't force us out of school to supply cheap labour for capitalism!'

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RACIST ATTACKS MEETING FIRE WITH FIRE

The British state's offensive against black people is intensifying. Already intolerable levels of police harassment are increasing week by week. It is no accident or coincidence that the British state - the major backer of the racist apartheid regime in South Africa - should now be using methods which increasingly resemble those of apartheid.

Pass Laws in Britain

The recent passport raids at the Hilton Hotel, Bestways supermarket and the Main gas appliance factory show that for black people in Britain the pass laws have arrived. Black workers in Edmonton were terrified when a force of police surrounded their factory using

dogs and vans and then forcibly detained 28 of the workers. At Bestways police swooped, sealed off the exits, again using dogs, and then arrested 20 people. Black workers were held for hours, interrogated four times and forced to produce passports. How does this differ from the pass raids carried out in South Africa? There black people are forced to carry their passes all the time. Now the British state is intent on forcing the same conditions on black workers here.

Whilst these passport raids have received considerable publicity, the steady increase in other police terror tactics goes unreported. Few people will have heard of the case of the Hornsey 70 Plus. Yet this case shows equally clearly the future which the British state is planning for black people.

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MEETING FIRE WITH FIRE

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The Hornsey 70 Plus

Since December over 135 people have been arrested by a special police unit centred at Tottenham Lane station. 83 of those arrested have been charged with a variety of offences. The methods used by this special unit include:

- Randomly picking up black youths off the streets.
- Holding them for several days—in some cases 7 days—without access to family or legal advice.
- Stopping trains and removing all the young black passengers. Holding up the train whilst they are searched and vetted on the platform. Some of them in turn get taken to Tottenham Lane police station.

So already without benefit of 'special' legislation the police are holding black people for periods equivalent to those Irish people have to endure under the PTA. The persecution does not end there. The cases of the 83 charged are going through Highgate Magistrates Court. This racist court has set stringent bail conditions for those who have been 'lucky' enough to get bail. Youths are on bail of £6,000, and in one case a staggering £14,000. Those on bail also have a curfew imposed on them which forbids them to leave home between 9pm and 6am.

Simply to be a black worker means that your factory is raided, you are dragged into a police station, detained, abused and threatened. Simply to be a black youth means that you are dragged off a train, searched, taken into custody, held for days, framed and then imprisoned or put on curfew.

Political Police

As this racist offensive by the state increases so

does fear grow in the minds of the ruling class. They know that repression of this order breeds resistance. It is with the aim of stamping out this resistance that the police are increasing their terror tactics. At the same time they are becoming an ever more openly political police force. They aim to prevent political opposition growing. In this issue of **FRFI** alone we show how the police have:

- Joined with Rochdale CRE to try to find out who is organising the resistance to NF/police racism in Rochdale.
- Told Anwar Ditta that her campaign against the racist exclusion of her children should not be linked up with the struggle of the Republican POWs in the H-Blocks.
- Followed **FRFI** sellers around Chapeltown telling buyers of the paper that it is 'rubbish' and threatening them.
- Broken up an anti-racist street meeting in Holloway and arrested 4 **FRFI** supporters.

The list is endless. Britain's police are being used both as a military and a political tool against black resistance and the growing anti-imperialist movement in Britain.

'Cooperation' with murderers

The extent of ruling class fear can be gauged from the hysterical response which greeted the recent National Council of Asian, African and Caribbean Organisations' decision to end 'cooperation' with the police. The CRE, that nest of paid spies, called this decision 'highly irresponsible'. The Police Federation called it 'very silly'. All the newspaper editorials agreed. All the spokesmen of the ruling class stressed the necessity of 'cooperation' with the police and the virtues of 'community relations'. What hypocrisy. With one hand they are clubbing black people and with the other demanding that they 'cooperate' with those wielding the club!

In this they are supported by the petit bour-

geois socialists, the 'false friends' like the CP. The Morning Star recently carried an article entitled 'Bobbies on the beat cut estate crime—community policing in Brixton working well'. This is a hymn of praise to the 'community policing' scheme currently operating in Stockwell Estate. The CP is particularly concerned to argue that the scheme is helping to overcome 'negative attitudes' towards the police.

This is their real concern. To fool the oppressed, to prevent them from engaging in revolutionary resistance ('negative attitudes') to the police. The CP which now sings the praises of 'community policing' called the St Pauls uprising, 'primitive' and condemned it. The Police, the Government, the CRE, the newspapers and the false friends—this array of ruling class vermin and their lackeys—have only one concern: to block the revolutionary road increasingly being taken by the black vanguard.

For throughout the country black people have *already* rejected 'cooperation' fantasies and are showing that they will fight back to defend themselves. At St Pauls we saw an uprising led by black people against the police. As unemployment, poverty and repression become the only prospects for larger and larger sections of the working class we will see the police being used more openly and more frequently against the working class. And black people, by their struggles are *already* demonstrating the only manner in which such repression can be resisted. In this they are pointing the way forward to the rest of the working class.

The British state is well aware of this and that is why today it is concentrating its heaviest fire against black people. We have no doubt that their fire will be met not by 'cooperation' but by the unquenchable fire of the oppressed.

Maxine Williams

JUST DOING THEIR DUTY

Choking on your own medicine

A policeman from Merseyside is alleging that he was beaten up in the police station by Worcester police. It is said that the Worcester police using the most sophisticated techniques of detection came to the conclusion that the Merseyside cop was only 'impersonating a policeman'. So they treated him as a member of the public—as a result he suffered 'internal injuries'.

British Democracy

A 17 year old black girl in Catford South London was bound over for £25 to keep the peace. She was accused of shouting 'All you ——— should have your arms blown off' at passing policemen. This followed the bomb explosion at Catford police station.

New-style riot gear baffles police

Following the St Pauls uprising the Avon and Somerset police have ordered 300 cricketers protective boxes. Constables, however, are reporting difficulty in keeping them on their heads.

Old Blagg

Last September, police in Surrey found a house with its door forced open. They investigated and found a man hiding in the back garden with a jemmy in his pocket. They must have been somewhat put out to discover a complication in this clear cut case.

The complication was that the jemmy-carrier was none other than Detective Constable Blagg, of Wandsworth CID.

The amazing sequel to this was that DC Blagg was found not guilty of burglary at Surbiton Crown Court on 2 July.

Perhaps the jury took their lead from the police who failed to either fingerprint the jemmy, or to call the other man found at the house as a witness.

Or perhaps the jury was simply moved by DC Blagg's touching defence. This was that having been hit on the head some days previously he had suffered amnesia, and could not remember why he was in the garden or where the jemmy came from.

Medical experts report that such cases of amnesia are becoming more and more frequent among the police.

DON'T MISS THIS SPECIAL OFFER TO FRFI SUBSCRIBERS:

BLACK BOLSHEVIK
Autobiography of an Afro-
American Communist.
Harry Haywood.

Liberator Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1978
700 pages. Pluto Press import

Read this important autobiography of a black revolutionary whose lifetime's work was dedicated to the anti-racist, anti-imperialist struggle in the USA.

Price normally is £2.95. Available to FRFI subscribers for only £2 from your local FRFI seller. Buy it now! Add £1.20 if you are ordering by post.

Available from RCG Publications Ltd
49 Railton Road, London SE24

Orders can be collected from our London Office at the above address.

SUPPORTER GROUPS

If you support the work which **FRFI** is doing, why not become an **active** supporter? Join an **FRFI Supporter Group**. These groups meet to discuss the paper and to organise anti-racist, anti-imperialist work

If you want details about groups in Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Sheffield, Liverpool, Leeds, Rochdale, Manchester, Birmingham, Luton and London, phone 01-737 3922 or write to us at 49, Railton Road, London SE24 0LN

WE NEED FRFI MONTHLY

BECOME A FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM! SUPPORTER

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! is committed to the building of an anti-racist, anti-imperialist movement in Britain. It is a campaigning newspaper *actively* engaged in support of the struggles of black people in Britain against racism, and the struggles of liberation movements against British imperialism.

How can you aid our work?

We need more people to sell **Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** so that new people can read it and become involved in the fight-back. We need more people writing for **Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** about their local struggles and campaigns. We need many more people subscribing to **Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** to give us the regular income we need to support our work.

Become a **Fight Racism Fight Imperialism! subscriber**—for £1.50 you will get 5 issues, for £3 you will get 10 issues.

Become a **Fight Racism Fight Imperialism! seller**—order 10, 20 or more copies and sell them.

Become a **Fight Racism Fight Imperialism! correspondent**—send us news of the issues and struggles in your area.

BECOME A SUPPORTER

If you support our aims why don't you become a supporter? Fill in your name and address, enclose £2 (cheques and postal orders payable to RCG Publications Ltd) and send to 49, Railton Road London SE24 0LN. You will receive a supporters card, a year's subscription to **FRFI**, and details of all our activities in your area and nationally.

Name

Address

In the eight months since **Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** first appeared the impact of our anti-racist, anti-imperialist paper has been heartening, both in Britain and abroad. One of our new readers wrote to us from Kettering saying, '**FRFI** is the only newspaper I know that openly supports the struggles of ethnic minorities in Britain and Ireland and it helps to expose the savagery and brutal repression inflicted daily on Republican Freedom Fighters in the north of Ireland. Keep up the good work!' We intend to!—our supporters are using **FRFI** to build anti-imperialist work in many new localities. Already we are receiving so much material that we have had to make **FRFI** 16 pages. Yet for the paper to do the job properly it has to be a monthly. Help us to make this a reality.

FRFI builds support for the struggles of black people against the racist British state, and for the anti-imperialist national liberation struggles—in particular in Ireland and Southern Africa. This issue continues to keep you in touch with the anti-imperialist struggle:

- the campaign to bring Anwar Ditta's children home
- the fightback against immigration controls, Sus, the PTA and police censorship
- the Miami Uprising against American Imperialism
- the heroic struggles of the liberation movements in Southern Africa
- the defence of Sinn Fein comrades Jim Reilly and Gerry MacLochlainn
- the fight for POW status in the H-Blocks, Long Kesh and Armagh jail

FRFI is playing a vital political role in the building of an anti-racist, anti-imperialist movement in Britain. **FRFI must become monthly now! The future of this work is in the hands of you, our supporters. Only you can do what is necessary to raise the money and expand the sales of the**

paper which will make this possible.

We need at least £500 every month. Our fund drive to the end of May achieved £1200. The target was £2500. Once again we thank all those who have supported **FRFI** by donating and raising money for the fund drive. Yet those efforts have to be made by all of our supporters who see the necessity of the transformation of **FRFI** into a monthly paper. Readers and supporters must redouble their efforts to raise money for **FRFI**.

How you can help

- become an **FRFI** supporter (see separate box)
- Sell **FRFI** to your friends, your work-mates, take it round your estate. Take 10 or 20 copies of each issue. Set up an **FRFI** supporters group in your area. Contact us and we will give every assistance.
- Can you make a regular commitment to the fund drive? Let us know how much you can afford—weekly or monthly.
- Take out a £10 deal. For this you get an **FRFI** supporter's card, and all our publications over a twelve month period, including each issue of **FRFI**. The donation goes to the fund drive and we will keep you informed of **FRFI** activities in your area.
- Can you organise or help us organise a fund-raising event in your area? A disco or a film show? This is an entertaining way to raise money for the paper. Jumble sales, books and records sales are easy to organise and can raise £50-100. Raffles can raise £10-20 in an evening.

Each issue of **FRFI** carries a report on the fund drive. The target is £1000 by mid-September. Help us get **FRFI** monthly—start now! (Postal orders and cheques payable to RCG Publications Ltd)

FLAMES OF REVOLUTION

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The revolutionary, anti-imperialist character of their fight is exemplified best in the words of one young black school student, who wrote:

'First the oppressors, racists, fascists, imperialists and colonialists will have to be got rid of and then all that remains will be the blacks, the rightful inhabitants of South Africa.'

Then Nelson Mandela will become premier. He will have a communist government.'

It is this revolutionary movement and this revolutionary spirit that the apartheid regime tried to crush with bullets, teargas, dogs and batons. In Capetown police shot dead two students. In Johannesburg 800 were arrested when police attacked a demonstration with dogs and batons. In Bloemfontein armed police ringed a black township and tried to smash a demonstration with guns and teargas. Such scenes have been repeated throughout the country. Thousands have been arrested and hundreds injured.

But the movement was not subdued. Defying death and injury the students continued to courageously fight knowing that for them and all black people there can only be complete destruction of the apartheid imperialist system or continued oppression, poverty and suffering.

The imperialists have rightly judged this movement as **ominous** — **ominous** that is for the imperialists. One of their representatives, quoted in the **Financial Times** said:

'These students are arguing in terms of the class struggle... that could be an ominous development.'

Indeed an **ominous** development for the apartheid regime, for the white racists and British imperialists who have grown wealthy and fat on the back of the black masses. Especially **ominous** for imperialism as the mass student struggles coincide with a new wave of massive workers' strikes. The black working class, kept in abject poverty, denied the right to

organise in trade unions, denied all political rights — solely in order that British and other imperialists can make profits — is now making its mighty voice heard loud and clear. Hundreds of imperialist firms have been hit by strikes against the racist apartheid system, by strikes for decent wages and for the right to organise democratic and independent trade unions.

In October 1979 workers at Fords in Port Elizabeth struck demanding the immediate reinstatement of Thomazile Botha sacked for his role in organising the black community in the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Association (PEBCO). Within two days they won, but continued the struggle for better pay, conditions and the removal of racist foreman. The apartheid state, at the request of Fords, moved in to break the strike arresting Thomazile Botha and other leaders under the Terrorism Act. Despite this, the strike received the overwhelming support of the community. Mass meetings of 10s of thousands were organised by PEBCO and workers in General Tyre and a paper mill struck in solidarity. In January 1980, the strike was partially won. But Thomazile Botha, first banned has now been forced to flee the country. In Durban, 3000 textile workers went on strike demanding better wages, the response of the regime was to send in the police and break up a workers' demonstration with teargas.

The whole of the Cape area has been affected by the tremendous struggles of black meat workers, who have now been engaged in a two month long battle for the right to be represented by their own elected bodies. The struggle which began in one meat processing plant soon gathered solidarity from most other meat workers in the area. The regime and the employers fearing for their profits refused to grant the workers demands, but the workers, fighting against the racism of the regime received tremendous backing from the community. Students began organising a meat boycott, which was then supported by the rest of the community. This outstanding unity of workers, students and the community has been

repeated in numerous other workers struggles and the response of the regime has been the same — repression. The fear of the black working class by the imperialist racist regime was demonstrated best by the virtual general strike in Uitenhage an industrial estate near Port Elizabeth. Workers at Volkswagen struck for better wages, the strike immediately spread to eleven other factories and the whole estate was paralysed. Coming a week after the Capetown uprising, the apartheid regime fearing another revolutionary insurrection encircled the estate with armed police and troops and put armed guards on the factories!

The united revolutionary challenge of all sections of the oppressed masses in South Africa combined with the ANC's armed struggle has brought forth cold blooded savagery from the apartheid regime. It tried to drown the current revolutionary uprising in the blood of the oppressed when on 17 June during the uprising of Capetown blacks it shot dead over 60 people. But it failed and the battle continues and will escalate.

And this battle is also a battle against British imperialism without whose support the apartheid state and all its barbarity would not survive another day. It is British imperialism which nourishes and sustains the South African racist state. It is British imperialism, with its massive investments of over £7000 million which supports the brutal reactionary state's oppression of black people in order that with these investments it can continue to rob and the plunder the wealth created by black people. British imperialism has therefore responded to the latest wave of the freedom struggle with fear and horror. Fear and horror that the black masses led by the ANC will not only smash the racist state, but expropriate all imperialist monopolies which have enriched themselves whilst the masses suffered and starved. It was the true voice of imperialism which spoke in the **Financial Times**:

'The events of the past few weeks (we should now say months — FRFI) in South Africa give one an oppressive feeling: the bloody events of Soweto in June 1976 seem to be happening again.'

'There is growing concern in the business community especially among foreign

investors (over half British — FRFI) about the resurgence of unrest.'

The freedom struggle in South Africa, the tremendous courage and heroism of the black masses gives the imperialists 'oppressive feelings'! Imperialism feels oppressed by the fight for freedom and democracy! British imperialism which so hypocritically sings the virtues of democracy and freedom, means only democracy and freedom for the imperialists to rob and oppress the black masses. British imperialism, represented by Labour and Tory governments has sought every means to bolster the racist regime. It has refused, always in the interests of the banks and monopolies, to break economic, political and military ties with the regime. Today, when the regime is shooting down school students and workers, the British state is giving its blessing to the British Lions rugby tour of South Africa, whilst at the very same time as part of its reactionary anti-Soviet campaign it mounts a hysterical campaign to boycott the Moscow Olympic games. Whilst British imperialism is full of phrases of democratic reform, justice and freedom, it has Mr Ian Mackenzie of the British Standard Chartered Bank joining the South African Government's defence advisory board which specialises in the best way to crush the struggle of the oppressed masses.

Despite British imperialism and against it, the latest wave of the revolutionary struggle will continue.

The anti-imperialist and working class movement in Britain has only one interest: to give its unconditional support to the black masses of South Africa and to the ANC(SA) which is leading the liberation movement. Every blow which is delivered to the racist regime in South Africa is a blow to British imperialism whose reactionary and bloody system of imperialist democracy has brought nothing but suffering and exploitation to all who come under its rule — to the Irish people, to the people of Zimbabwe, to black people in Britain, and to all the oppressed and working class throughout the world.

Eddie Abrahams.

ANC CRITICS

We have always said that the British petit bourgeois socialist groups refuse to support and have opposed the anti-imperialist struggle of national liberation movements. In **FRFI 1** we exposed the IMG's and SWP's opposition to the ANC(SA).

What was the response of these two organisations to the ANC's brilliant military operation against the SASOL oil plants. Nothing but a calculated insult, an expression of petit bourgeois, chauvinist contempt for the ANC and the black masses of South Africa who support the ANC!

The IMG and SWP dared not make any comment, were too cowardly to make any comment. Faced with an event of enormous significance these two organisations refused to say anything about it. The IMG newspaper **Socialist Challenge** said:

'Bombs planted by guerillas of the African National Congress blew up three top-secret oilplants in different parts of the country.

Millions of gallons of petrol, diesel, aviation fuel and chemicals were destroyed in fires which raged throughout Monday.

Two of the explosions were at SASOL plants south west of Johannesburg; the other bomb went off in the centre of an oil complex at Secunda east of Johannesburg. At least £5m worth of damage was caused.'

The IMG said nothing more — no comment, no explanation!

The SWP newspaper **Socialist Worker** said:

'And this week the Spear of the Nation struck. Two oil refineries were bombed — £4 million pounds of oil went up in a spiralling cloud of black smoke.

The "sophistication" and the "coordination" of the attack startled the white regime. "After all," they seemed to be saying, "these people are black. Who would have thought them capable of this?"'

The SWP said nothing more — no comment, no explanation!

Is this not an insult to the ANC! Is it not an expression of profound petit bourgeois contempt for the ANC! The operation proved that the ANC's army is of the highest calibre and that the effectiveness of the armed struggle in South Africa is beyond dispute. It proved that the armed struggle, which has been slowly escalating, will further intensify and score more and more successes. It furthermore proved that the ANC has the mass support of the blacks in South Africa. It proved that the ANC is capable of delivering deadly blows to the racist apartheid regime. The SWP and IMG chose to remain silent on these points. And their silence was no accident.

Before the ANC operation these organisations repeatedly opposed, denounced and criticised the ANC: The SWP has said

'The leadership of the national liberation movements including the ANC have typically been petit bourgeois both in social position and ideology.'

The struggle for national liberation in South

Africa requires critical examination and... the rejection of the ideology which has given rise to that struggle — African nationalism.' (**Southern Africa after Soweto**, 1978, Alex Callinicos and John Rogers.

The IMG has said

'(The ANC's) ability to influence the course of events in South Africa remains nil.' (**Socialist Challenge** June 1977)

It has attacked the ANC for:

'... posturing as the leader of everything that goes on in South Africa.' (**Socialist Challenge** June 1977)

To have made any comments on the ANC operation against SASOL, the IMG and SWP would have had to retract all their attacks on the ANC. They would have had to admit to the readers of their petit bourgeois newspapers that they have lied and slandered the ANC. They would have been forced to acknowledge the leading role of the ANC in the South African liberation struggle and offered it full and unconditional support. This the IMG and SWP refuse to do, for they refuse to openly side with the oppressed against British imperialism.

ANGOLA INVASION

Since completing our article on South Africa, the scale of the latest imperialist backed South African military intervention into Angola has increased dramatically. The South African regime's ground-and-air invasion is only the latest of its attempts to destroy SWAPO and its army the People's Liberation Army, and to weaken the People's Republic of Angola which provides support for the Namibian liberation movement. The British imperialists, of course,

have not raised their voice in protest! Whilst denouncing the USSR's role in the Afghanistan revolution, they have remained silent in the face of this imperialist aggression. **Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** demands the immediate withdrawal of all South African imperialist backed troops from Angola. **Victory to the Namibian People** **Victory to SWAPO and the People's Liberation Army.**

NO COMMENT

Morning Star on the IRA bombing of gasholders at Canvey Island:

Headline **When Will They Learn**

'Anyone who thinks that blowing apart Canvey or tearing the guts out of Greenwich is the way to winning the hearts and minds of the British people for Irish freedom and unity is as politically primitive as the most obtuse Tory back-bencher.'

(Morning Star 19 January 1979)

Morning Star on the ANC's bombing of SASOL oil refineries

Headline **Rebels Light Freedom Torch**

'South Africa's freedom fighters struck their most spectacular blow so far against the country's hated apartheid regime when they blew up three top-secret oil plants in different parts of the country.'

(Morning Star 3 June 1980)

FIGHTBACK



4 SUPPORTERS ARRESTED

On Saturday 21st June, Holloway Police broke up a street meeting on Seven Sisters Road and arrested 4 Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! supporters.

These arrests came after the Earlington Family Defence Committee supported by FRFI has been holding street meetings on the same site for 7 months. The police obviously decided that they would bring these meetings to an end and drive FRFI off the streets. The weekly exposure of their racist beatings and frame-ups, of their SUS sweeps and racial abuse was becoming too much of a threat for them. Even more of a threat was the message put across week after week on the streets of Holloway that organised resistance to police racism and the British imperialist state must be built.

They began their campaign of harassment on 24 May 1980. On that occasion they sent an Inspector Gilbertson and a Sergeant to say that the use of the megaphone must cease, that an illegal street collection was taking place and that FRFI sellers were causing obstruction – all these activities must cease, they said – or else! The police repeated the same threats the following week. On both occasions they were sent away from the street meeting having been told that we had no intention of stopping our meeting. On one occasion, as he left, a disgruntled Inspector Gilbertson remarked 'you have won the battle but not the war'. Obviously, the Holloway police see themselves as 'at war' with the local black population and any organisation which stands up in support of the anti-racist struggle.

Finally, the police chose 21 June to make their move. They swooped on the street meeting and grabbed 4 people. The four were taken to Holloway Police Station, held for 1½ hours and then released. That it was clearly the intention of the police simply to harass the street meeting was shown by the fact that charges were not immediately pressed. Instead the four were told that charges of obstructing the highway, obstructing the police and illegally collecting money were being 'reported' and that summonses 'may' be issued.

The fact that a picket was immediately placed on the police station while the 4 were inside ensured their early release. Holloway police, for once, had to mind their Ps and Qs. They could not dish out the treatment of beatings and insults which they have become accustomed to use.

We have no doubt that Holloway police chose 21 June to make arrests because they knew that on 28 June FRFI local supporters were mobilising for the Hands Off Ireland Defence Campaign demo in Luton against police censorship. After the arrests FRFI continued its mobilisation for the very successful Luton demo. They decided that they would choose the time when they would stand up in open defiance of Holloway police and not let the police choose it for them. That time is 5 July. FRFI supporters have called a large protest street meeting for 5 July at which they will do exactly what they have done for the past 7 months – speak out against police racism and mobilise support for the struggles of black people. The police will not drive FRFI off the streets of Holloway, where supporters have sold 700 copies of FRFI-4 on Seven Sisters Road alone. Inspector Gilbertson said to one of the 4 arrested 'You will never build anything with that paper'. He will eat his words.

STOP PRESS

Fight Racism Fight Imperialism! returned to Seven Sisters Road on 5 July. Despite a heavy presence from police, the street meeting was held. All the activities the police had deemed illegal on 21 June were carried on. Seeing the amount of support FRFI had, the police did not dare to arrest anyone. The meeting ended with a militant march past Holloway Police Station. Shouting defiant slogans – 'Fight racism, Fight police attacks' – the march was greeted with open support from by-standers, including clenched fist salutes. The police, though furious, were impotent. FRFI's message was clear – Every attack will be resisted.

HARASSMENT

Recently, the *Leeds Evening Post* carried a glowing account of police efforts to 'improve race relations' under the heading 'How off-duty police are helping to ease race tension'. The article movingly describes 'the continuing dialogue on matters affecting police and community relations'. FRFI supporters in the area have had their own experience of this 'tension-easing' dialogue.

On the occasion, the Leeds police followed FRFI sellers from door to door. As the sellers moved from one house to another, the police knocked at the doors of people who bought the paper. The following is an example of the 'community-police dialogue' which ensued.

Tension-Easing Policeman: Have you just bought a paper?

Resident: Yes. So what if I have? It's my property. I paid for it.

TEP: Can we have a look?

Resident: No.

TEP: How much did you pay?

Resident: 20 pence.

TEP: 20 pence for that rubbish!

Resident: I'll pay for what I want.

TEP: We know you're Irish.

On another occasion, a police car pulled up and accosted the sellers, demanding to know what was being said about the police.

This is the real programme of the Leeds police: a programme of political surveillance, harassment and veiled threats!

POLICE RACISM IN LIVERPOOL 8

That the racist harassment suffered by the Earlington family is nothing unusual is evident from the experience of the Cooper family in Liverpool. Their harassment started one early Sunday morning in May 1979, when two CID officers broke down their door with a warrant to search for stolen bicycles. 16-year-old Paul Cooper was held for the day, and then charged with breaking into a bicycle shop and robbing it. On 4 September, the house was raided again. This time, six CID officers were involved, telling the father, Lester Cooper, that they were looking for stolen jewelry. Needless to say, none was found. But having learned that Lester worked at Fords, they took away a car battery, a dynamo and a bike lamp for 'examination'. They decided that furniture upstairs must be stolen too, and forthwith took Lester down to Admiral Street police Station. Paul had already been arrested separately at a bus stop on his way to school. Both were held for most of the day, and charged with the theft of undiscovered jewelry. Two days later, Paul was found not guilty of the bicycle shop robbery. Three weeks after that, the charges for stealing jewelry were dropped without explanation. No examination of the furniture that was alleged to be stolen was ever made. Two months later, the battery, dynamo and bicycle lamp were returned.

Yet this was just a beginning. Since then, Lester has been stopped four times in his car, and had it searched for 'stolen goods' once. Only once has he been charged – when a dent in his car was alleged to have made it unsafe. That the officer who booked him had already stopped him once previously shows the lengths to which they have gone to make at least one charge stick. Paul's problems have been even worse. His record so far is:

- 1 Arrested for breaking in and stealing from a bicycle shop. Found not guilty.
- 2 Arrested for stealing jewelry. Charge dropped.
- 3 Arrested for rape. Charge dropped.
- 4 Arrested for stealing a car. Charge dropped.
- 5 Arrested for handbag snatching. Charge dropped.
- 6 Arrested for wounding with intent, aggravated burglary and affray. Yet to be heard.
- 7 Arrested for breaking into and robbing a radio shop. Four white youths picked up on same charge. Charges dropped against them but not against Paul.

All this has taken place in the twelve months since May 1979! He was picked up on the stolen car charge because he happened to have just got off a bus in Smithdown Road where the car had been abandoned. And having been placed on a curfew following the sixth charge, he was picked up for the seventh because he was seen at a nearby bus stop 10 minutes after his curfew was supposed to begin.

Lester Cooper has made formal complaints about the two house searches, but no reply has been forthcoming. He is also taking civil action against the police. The police have refused to pay for the damage they did to the front door. The fact that he has refused to be cowed by the police, and persisted in making complaints, is probably one reason why the police have been so keen to pin at least one charge. Yet this is only one example of the kind of harassment black families suffer in Liverpool, as the article in FRFI 2 on the Liverpool Precinct Five case shows. **Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** expresses its full support to the Cooper family, and to all other black families suffering at the hands of the racist Liverpool police.

Liverpool Correspondent

LUTON RACIST ATTACKS

Recent racist attacks in Luton clearly underline the state's role in oppressing black people. Over the last November period, racist youths regularly began to harass Asians in the Bury Park Area of Luton. Coming from local villages, or towns such as Dunstable, wearing 'Anti-Paki League' and 'British Movement' badges, they would drive into Luton to attack black people. One Saturday, in the early hours, a gang of these thugs attacked the Shalimar Restaurant, a centre of Asian social life, wrecking it, and seriously knifing the manager. On the Sunday about 60 skinheads attacked Asians outside a cinema in Bury Park. The local Asian youth fought back beating off their attackers.

The police arrived to arrest 15 Asians, letting the racists go free. Nine Asians were held for a week without bail. The Asian community immediately set up a Defence Committee which condemned the police actions in a telegram to the Home Secretary Whitelaw.

These attacks were made at a time when the local MP, John Carlisle (Luton West), was calling for immigrants to be encouraged to 'go home', that all immigration be halted for two years, and that Asians who spoke no English should be obliged to pay for English lessons themselves.

The racism of Carlisle was complimented by that of his colleagues. Two of the attackers of the Shalima Restaurant were captured by Asians, only to be bound over and released with £10 fines by the court. The 15 Asians arrested for defending their community, however, were

given heavy fines or sent to Borstal! The local owners, horrified at the oppressed resisting their oppressors, demanded in headlines in the local paper – 'Asians Must Cool It'!

Fomented and encouraged by the State's racism, harassment by racist gangs continued in February. Over 20 Asian shop windows were smashed in one week, six in a night, by thugs on motorbikes. Other shopkeepers were harassed at their counters. Local West Indians were also attacked by groups of racists after discos in the area. As a result, local black people have joined together and are now well prepared to deal with these assaults. For this reason the racists are now showing greater reluctance to continue their raids.

Luton Asian Youth

SKINHEADS, POLICE, CRE smash the racist chain

Over the past few months in Rochdale, there have been a growing number of vicious racist attacks on Asian people. This culminated on Friday 30 May when the local Asian cinema was twice attacked by a gang of 30 skinheads, throwing bottles, bricks and even dustbins. One Asian busdriver was badly injured by a brick thrown at his head.

The police played their usual role, appearing twenty minutes after being called and proceeding to accuse four Asians, who were being chased off by fifteen skinheads, of being troublemakers.

The local Asian youth decided to teach the skinheads a lesson and to show them that they would fightback to defend themselves. The following Friday, 6 June they organised and confronted a gang of about twenty skinheads in the town centre. At the sight of the organised Asian youth the skinheads turned tail and literally ran for cover...the police station! They knew that the police would as usual, protect them. How right was the slogan chanted by the Asians in Oldham when the police were protecting an NF racists demonstration. They chanted:

'You are the big National Front and those you are protecting are the police without uniforms'.

After this confrontation the police appeared and attempted to harass the Asian youth, threatening them that if they did not keep out of the town centre then they would be arrested.

The Asian youth weren't having that. They decided after much planning, to hold a march through Rochdale town centre at 8 pm the following Saturday. A leaflet was produced and distributed amongst the Asian youth in Rochdale announcing the formation of a Rochdale Asian Youth Movement and calling on people to mobilise for the demonstration.

At the first sign of organised resistance by the Asian youth, the police and the CRE joined together in a concerted attempt to sabotage the march and head-off any organised fightback.

The police tried everything to find out who was organising the march. They interviewed an Asian youth worker at his work and went to see

JACK WODDIS AWARD

For their treacherous role in anti-racist campaigns in Rochdale, this issue's **Jack Woddiss Award** for national chauvinism has been awarded to **Rochdale CRE**.

For the second time, Tariq Ali was forced into the position of runner-up. This time for his loathesome statements about Southall, reported on p6.

Do you have a candidate for the next award? Let us know.

ANWAR DITTA the fight goes on

The Anwar Ditta Defence Committee's campaign to force the racist Home Office to allow Anwar Ditta's three children to come to England to join their family still continues. In previous issues of FRFI we reported on the build-up of support for the campaign which eventually forced the Home Office to bring forward the date for Anwar Ditta's appeal before the immigration courts.

THE LEAFLET THE POLICE THREATENED TO PROSECUTE

We reprint the leaflet produced by Rochdale Asian youth which the police and the CRE objected to so strongly!

ASIAN YOUTH MOVEMENT - ROCHDALE MARCH AGAINST RACIST ATTACKS

In the last few weeks vicious attacks from white racists on Asian people in Rochdale, young and old, have become almost daily.

One Asian family in Whitworth have suffered constant assaults by skinheads on their home for weeks on end. The door has been knocked in and the windows repeatedly smashed. Young kids of 5-10 years have been harassed on the streets and local shops have been robbed.

An Asian man in Nicholson Street has been physically attacked by a white neighbour and his wife and children constantly abused and terrorised.

A fortnight ago an Asian worker from Rochdale, who works in Littleborough, was beaten up by skinheads.

On Friday 23 May white racists attacked a middle-aged Asian man as he came out of the mosque in Hare Street, leaving him badly beaten.

On the same day two Asian youths were attacked near Champness Hall in Drake Street by white racists.

On Friday 30 May the Palace Cinema was twice attacked by a gang of about 30 skinheads throwing bottles, sticks, stones and even dustbins. One Asian bus driver was badly injured by a brick thrown at his head.

On Tuesday 3 June two Asian youths were beaten up by skinheads at Greenhill school.

This is only the tip of the iceberg. These are

The appeal which was heard on 16 May fully confirmed this. Anwar Ditta attended with all the necessary evidence - passports, birth certificates, photographs and other documents - to prove her right to have her children with her. But none of this evidence was of any interest to the Home Office Prosecutor. He did not once attempt to challenge this evidence. To have done so would have exposed the blatantly lying claims of the Home Office. So instead this arrogant racist representative of the British state launched a virulent tirade of racist abuse against Anwar Ditta and her witnesses. Mrs Ditta's statements were not to be believed. The reason? Anwar Ditta was 'no ordinary Asian lady'. She was a 'forceful person', a 'very western lady' who had 'broken from her family traditions' and who 'had a very forceful and articulate way of putting across her views'. These characteristics belied her apparent naivety. She must therefore, he said, be lying. As Anwar Ditta commented after the hearing 'If westernised means to be a liar, the Home Office is the biggest liar'. The prosecution then went on to challenge the credibility of Anwar's witnesses. Not with any evidence relating to the case, this would have been too risky, but with a string of insults. The witnesses were liars and deceitful

Anwar Ditta to see if she was behind it all! The police said that if they discovered the authors of the leaflet they would prosecute them under the Race Relations Act. We should remember that it was also Rochdale police who visited Anwar Ditta and 'advised' her that her campaign to bring her children into Britain had nothing to do with the struggle of the men in the H-Blocks. To link the two would, said these political police, only do damage to Anwar's cause. Rochdale police have once again shown that they are playing a directly political role, spying on the fightback of the oppressed and threatening those who fightback.

The CRE managed to put enormous pressure on the local Asian youth and finally on Friday 13 June, the night before the march the youth

only a few examples of the physical attacks on black people in Rochdale from skinheads and other white racists. Behind these attacks lie the attacks black people also suffer from the racism of the police and the Home Office.

The police showed which side they were on when the Odeon Cinema was attacked. They eventually appeared - 20 minutes after being called - and proceeded to accuse 4 Asians who were being chased off by 15 skinheads of being 'the trouble-makers'!

When last Friday, 6 June, Asian youth organised to defend themselves on the offensive, the police and the CID gave protection to the racists and harassed and attempted to arrest the blacks.

Anwar Ditta and Shuja Ud Din from Rochdale are still fighting to be united with their three children in Pakistan. For more than four years the Home Office have refused these children entry to Britain. Anwar Ditta and Shuja Ud Din are still waiting to hear the result of their appeal on May 16.

The growing strength of the Anwar Ditta Defence Campaign shows the need and the possibility of *fighting back* against these racist attacks - from wherever they appear. The Asian Youth Movement - Rochdale has called this march to demonstrate that the Asian community will no longer tolerate these threats to their freedom and democratic rights.

Come and join the march. Show your opposition to racist attacks. The Asian Youth Movement - Rochdale is clear about its intentions because our slogan is:

**WE ARE HERE TO STAY AND WE ARE
HERE TO FIGHT!
END POLICE HARASSMENT!
DOWN WITH THE RACISTS!**

people and whatever they said of Anwar's children should not be accepted. This was the sum total of the Home Office's case - racist abuse and character assassination. No reference to concrete evidence, no concern for facts. Such is the 'justice' and 'concern' with legality which black people experience in British imperialist courts.

The disgusting spectacle in court did not, however, end here. The Manchester Law Centre, supposedly defending Anwar Ditta made concession after concession to the Home Office. Shushma Lal for the Manchester Law Centre did not denounce and expose the racist allegations of the Home Office. This would have been too much like open opposition to imperialism! Responding to the attacks on Anwar Ditta, she merely stated that Anwar Ditta was 'not completely westernised' and that despite her own history she was still an 'Asian lady'. As for the Home Office' attacks on the credibility of the witnesses, should could only mutter that 'credibility was not important'! In other words, the Manchester Law Centre, financed by the imperialist British state, refused to defend Anwar Ditta and her witnesses. Even more, and most astounding, not once in her summing up did Shushma Lal point to the fact

decided to postpone the march.

They went to the local mosque to convey their decision to the community leaders and then arranged to meet a delegation from the police. This meeting was set up for them by the CRE! Caroline Beatty the CRE community relations officer, already known to anti-racists in Rochdale for her treacherous role on the Anwar Ditta Defence Committee, sat laughing and joking with police representatives! The Asian youth announced that the march was postponed but would take place if the police failed to protect the Asian community. Later that same night the police showed the level of protection they give to the Asian community when a gang of skinheads rampaged through streets in one of the Asian districts, smashing windows and chanting racist slogans.

This event was ignored by the local paper, the Rochdale Observer, which aided the police /CRE campaign by carrying an article on its front page entitled - 'Leaflet - Harm to race relations'. This gave quotes from the police and CRE attacking the march and the mobilising leaflet. Caroline Beatty for the CRE said:

'The CRE does not support distribution of a leaflet worded in this way'.

Stanley Hope, also CRE said:

'I would strongly urge people not to get involved in any kind of disturbance, allegations of this type must be fought in other diplomatic ways'.

The police were quoted saying that the leaflet would set their 'community relations' work back many years!

Skinheads, police, CRE - all are agents of British imperialism! The skinheads attack the Asian community, the police protect the skinheads and the CRE do all in their power to head off the revolutionary resistance of the Asian youths into 'diplomatic' channels.

But they will not succeed! Even after the police and CRE conspiracy against the march and the provisional decision to call it off - it still went ahead. Nearly 200 Asians demonstrated to show they will not be intimidated by skinheads, police or the CRE. As the slogan on the leaflet said:

**WE ARE HERE TO STAY
WE ARE HERE TO FIGHT.**

that the prosecution had failed to even try challenging the vast amount of concrete evidence. On that day, the Manchester Law Centre exposed itself for what it was - an appendage to the British state. It will take up cases and 'fight' them only within the terms set by the racist state, it will rely on the 'fairness' and 'justice' of the very same state which itself openly flouts its own rules of evidence to suit its need to destroy black families.

The humiliation and torment Anwar Ditta suffered in court has continued. The adjudicator, at the end of the hearing declared that a decision would be announced within the 'next few days'. It is now nearly two months since the hearing and there has been no decision. Anwar Ditta has been left to suffer in expectation. This calculated and cold-blooded delay is not without reason. The Home Office is trying to drive the family to despair. Repeated phone calls requesting the announcement of a decision have been ignored. The Home Office in addition, knowing that a 'No' decision can only lead to the escalation of the campaign, are delaying it in the hope that the Anwar Ditta Defence Committee will lose its impetus and that the campaign will collapse. And then it can quietly and without any fuss destroy one more black family without further resistance.

But the British state's hopes will prove futile. The Anwar Ditta Defence Committee will once again be taking its campaign up and down the country and will continue until Anwar Ditta's children are reunited with their family.

Eddie Abrahams

REMEMBER SOUTHALL

The self-appointed task of the Unofficial Committee was to substitute itself for the public enquiry refused by the British state. And for the committee, which includes 2 professors, a Labour MP, 2 church representatives and a well-known trade union leader, the task proved to be an easy one. On the one hand there is the overwhelming evidence of wholesale police brutality:

'As we were made to go downstairs one by one this row of policemen kicked each person's legs

... Then the policeman at the top of the row got me by the hair. He pulled my head back. He then brought his truncheon down on my forehead. It was a heavy blow and I was completely stunned ... He then shouted to the other "Get this one" ... As I went down the stairs I was being kicked and my hair pulled ... Some of my hair came out ...'

(Statement from a woman assaulted by police in 6 Park View Road, p161)

Truncheons, state the report, were used by police on a 'massive scale', causing 3 skull fractures, one death and many serious head and other injuries. On the other hand, the unofficial committee is faced with the resistance of the people of Southall to this police attack. Here the enquiry's 'neutrality' turns into reaction as the community is condemned for fighting back:

'...on several occasions during the day missiles were thrown at the police ... on one occasion, it appears that a petrol bomb was thrown at a police coach ... We thoroughly deplore any such resort to violence, which resulted in injuries to 97 police officers. Those who used violence against the police must carry their share of the responsibility for what happened.' (p181)

The community is condemned but police violence is put down to a series of 'mistakes', 'failures of communication'. One point repeatedly made in the report is that a 'mistake' was made by police from outside Southall in failing to liaise with local police: 'Scotland Yard would have benefited from a closer liaison with the local police' (p166). And yet, as was revealed at one of the trials, no 'mistake' of this kind occurred. The police were liaising very well. Southall police were riding round the Southall back streets in an SPG van and pointing out those to be arrested! No mention of this in the report because it would destroy the whole thrust of the argument. As long as police brutality can be blamed on a section of the police force, on 'failures of communication', the illusion of British 'democracy' can be maintained. The real issues—the confrontation of the armed forces of the state and the oppressed—can be concealed. Thus the report ends by calling for reform of these 'mistakes', for reform of seemingly every repressive tactic of the British imperialist state: On the public order Act: it 'should be amended to provide a statutory right to demonstrate peacefully.' On the cordoning off of Southall: 'the Home Secretary should consider most seriously whether an operation of this nature ought ever to take place in future.' On the use of riot shields: 'The Home Secretary, the other Police Authorities and the police themselves should reconsider the decision to equip police with riot shields.' On the SPG: 'The Government should establish a public enquiry into the role and operation of the SPG and similar forces.'

The implication then is not only that the British imperialist state made 'mistakes' at Southall, but that these 'mistakes' can be reformed. However the truth is entirely the opposite. Southall showed that the actions of the British state are increasingly brutal, increasingly repressive and increasingly necessary to its existence.

British imperialism is facing a crisis—not only worldwide—as the struggles of liberation movements, particularly in Ireland and Southern Africa—threaten its very existence, but also inside Britain itself. As unemployment and inflation increase, black people are coming more and more heavily under the hammer of the



It is over one year since the devastating police attack on the black community in Southall. The outcome of the attack is well-known: one man dead, 1000 injured and 800 arrested of whom 342 have faced charges in the show trials at Barnet Magistrates Court, trials which became a living monument to British imperialist injustice. And, with the anniversary of Southall, has come a flood of 'new' revelations about what 'really' took place on 23 April 1979. A much heralded contribution to these 'revelations' is the Report of the Unofficial Committee of Enquiry into Southall, published by the NCCL, and enthusiastically received from many quarters, including the petit bourgeois socialists of the British left.

British state—through the SUS laws, the immigration laws, in the prisons, on the streets. But repression has brought resistance from black people who are placing themselves in the vanguard of the struggle against the racist British state. The ruling class is terrified at the development of this black revolutionary vanguard in the working class. This is why the British state was not making any 'mistake' at Southall—at every opportunity it aims to crush and isolate the struggles of black people. This is what the Unofficial Committee—in its insistence that the British imperialist state can be reformed—is concealing. The views expressed in the report would not be worthy of such comment, were it not for the fact that they have been so slavishly echoed and parroted by the petit bourgeois socialists of the British left.

What has their response been to the 'revelations' in the report and the anniversary of Southall? Their racist gut reaction to Southall was made clear at the time. The Communist Party of Great Britain called the resistance of the Southall youth 'a squalid street fight'. One year later the Bristol uprising was classed by the CP as 'primitive'. It is no surprise then that the CPGB greets the unofficial enquiry without the slightest hint of criticism. It shares an identical standpoint to the professors and MPs who wrote the report: that of the petit bourgeoisie who will only oppose the violence of the oppressor because it brings forth the violence of the oppressed. And what of *Socialist Challenge*, whose editor's comment on the resistance of the Southall youth was 'there are times when brain is more important than brawn'? On the anniversary of Southall Tariq Ali is singing the same old disgusting song. He uses the occasion of a review of the Unofficial Committee's report to come out with a stinging attack on those who are in his view responsible for the defeat at Southall. And who does he attack? Is it the Labour Government which supervised 5 years of police attacks on black people, including Southall? Is it the racist trade union leaders and

the Labour Party who have given not one crumb of support to the people of Southall? No. He again attacks the black people of Southall, in particular the Southall Youth Movement, who were at the forefront of the resistance on that day:

'Undoubtedly one major reason for the defeat suffered by the community on 23 April 1979 was a combination of the IWA's reformism and the SYM's refusal to understand that only united action and a collective co-ordination could deliver the goods.'

He quotes approvingly a 'leading Socialist Challenge supporter' who had suggested producing a badge with the slogan 'Bristol 1 Southall 0'. Such arrogant racism is truly the property of the petit bourgeois British left! The only '0' we are aware of has been the complete and utter failure of the petit bourgeois left to take up the struggle in support of the people of Southall.

Instead, the petit bourgeois left threw itself into a constitutional campaign over the death of Blair Peach. Turning their backs on the black community in Southall, the left used Blair Peach's murder for their own constitutional ends in a campaign devoted to narrowing down the events at Southall to the names of a few individual police officers. Such a campaign, in the absence of any campaign to defend Southall, has succeeded in isolating the black community in a way the British state would not have dared to hope for. 'Disband the SPG' is the cry that has come to represent Southall for the petit bourgeois socialists. 'Disband the SPG' is the pious resolution passed at the Labour Party and TUC conferences. And 'Disband the SPG' is the slogan which sums up the betrayal of Southall.

As *FRFI* has pointed out time after time, the mouthpieces of the British imperialist state have always attempted to cover up its bloody deeds by blaming them on 'panicking' soldiers, 'rioting' policemen. This was how the cold-

blooded massacre of 14 unarmed civilians by British soldiers in Derry 1972 was explained. This was how the ruling class press explained the death of Blair Peach and the massive injuries caused by police in Southall. The view put over is that the police, or rather a section of the police, the SPG, somehow 'got out of control'. Not surprisingly this is also the view that Inspector Alan Murray, formerly of SPG Unit 1 ('The Incorruptibles') had of the bloody assault carried out at 6 Park View Road, the headquarters of Peoples Unite:

'It was understandable but not excusable ... And it wouldn't have happened if there had been senior officers inside.'

(*Sunday Times* 1 June 1980)

The petit bourgeois socialists, with their campaign to seek out the 'bad apples' who got 'out of control' support this view entirely. *Even* the Unofficial Committee of Enquiry is forced to admit that a high level decision was taken by police to prevent any demonstration at all from taking place in Southall. *Even* the Unofficial Committee could not put down a systematic police operation, involving the cordoning off of an entire town, to the actions of a rampaging mob of 'out of control' police! As the report points out, the SPG did play a leading role, but were only 300 out of 3000 police present. Does our 'socialist' Tariq Ali have criticisms of this view? Yes. He castigates the report for 'not even' proposing that the SPG be disbanded—for not going far enough in blaming the violence on one particular section of the police?

Yet at the same time he dares to criticise the report of the enquiry for implying that the state is a 'neutral' state. Here you see to what banality Marxism can be reduced in the empty and meaningless language of the 'false friends' of the oppressed. Only the petit bourgeois socialists of the British left could hold that the stinking corpse of British democracy would smell more sweet if the SPG were disbanded into the ranks of the 'ordinary' police—the 'ordinary' police who 'ordinarily' harass, frame, abuse and beat up black people, all in the course of an 'ordinary' day.

In suggesting that the British police can be anything else but repressive and violent, the petit bourgeois socialists cover up the real nature of the imperialist state which offers nothing but violence and repression to the oppressed. The British state aimed to crush the black community of Southall. The petit-bourgeois socialists, by their attacks on the oppressed and by their total failure to build a campaign in defence of Southall, have aided the British state in this attempt.

Olivia Adamson

MIAMI



CAMERA PRESS

From May 17th through the 21st, the Black people of Miami revolted in the largest single violent rebellion since the 1960s. As with so many of the previous ghetto rebellions, the Miami uprising was sparked by an explosion of anger against racist courts and police, in this specific case, the acquittal of four white policemen accused of the murder of Arthur McDuffie, a black insurance executive. As was also the case in the previous rebellions, this particular point of anger tended to concentrate all of the other pressing issues faced by the Black communities, and by the American working class in general, especially the intolerable climbing unemployment which is 'officially' put at 10% in the area where the uprising took place.

Just as there are a number of similarities between the revolts of the 1960's and the events in Miami, there are also important differences, reflecting an intensification of the exploitation and oppression of black people in the U.S. as well as their higher level of struggle against these conditions. It finally took more than 3,600 National Guardsmen, 2000 police and state troopers, as well as murderous gangs of armed racist whites who were 'officially' credited with the deaths of at least three blacks, to suppress the uprising. Despite more than 1200 arrested, 400 injured and 15 dead, black people destroyed more than 100 million dollars of property, more than any other single such violent rebellion in previous periods. The actual dimension of these figures, and the mass participation which they reflect, can be considered from the fact that the great part of the uprising was carried out in the Liberty City area of Dade County, Florida, containing approximately 70,000 people. As a black reporter commented, the rebellion is both 'spontaneous and sophisticated', an anticipation of wider and deeper outbreaks to come.

As in the previous Black rebellions, it must be assumed that various of the figures released on the uprising, particularly the number of National Guardsmen, police, and white racist vigilantes who may have been either killed or wounded, have been played down, in an attempt to conceal the insurrectionary character of the revolt and to portray it as a 'race riot'.

The uprising developed directly out of a mass

political demonstration of more than 5000 black people, a demonstration in which an American imperialist flag was torn down and burned, the black nationalist banner of black, red, and green raised, and in which hundreds stormed the main police and courts' building in the heart of Miami, more than a mile from the black ghetto itself, holding these for six hours. The demonstration was called on the evening of 17 May, as news reached the television and other media that an all-white jury had acquitted the four white policemen of the murder of Arthur McDuffie, and this outrage was further compounded by the fact that one of the four policemen, Alex Marrero, has also been associated with previous racist violence against blacks. The crowd of thousands chanted McDuffie's name over and over again at the mass demonstration that sparked the uprising and through the three days and nights of fighting.

Right away, the initial 500 National Guardsmen called in after the police and state troopers were driven out had to be reinforced by larger and larger detachments of troops. Sniper fire was reported to be heavy, as the large numbers of unemployed black Vietnam veterans undoubtedly added their military expertise to the heroism displayed by the youth. Newspapers reported teenagers with .22 rifles going up against M16s, and often winning out in the confrontation. Furthermore, the widespread burning of more than 100 million dollars worth

US imperialism has tried to conceal the facts under the vicious propaganda about 'race riots', 'looters', and 'criminal elements'. They try to cover up the implications of the fact that it is the proletarian sections of the black people which have everywhere given leadership to these revolts, and that where the proletarian composition was the highest, the level and intensity of the revolt was also highest.

of property was reported to be 'highly selective', with whole square-blocks of white or Cuban-owned businesses being totally destroyed while several warehouses employing large numbers of black workers, in the same area, were spared. One meat-market, formerly owned by blacks but just sold two months ago to Cubans, was destroyed.

In retaliation and panic, racist vigilantes, including possibly members of the Klu Klux Klan, joined with the police and National Guardsmen in venting their anger against mainly unarmed blacks, including individuals outside of the area of the uprising itself. Unable to pin down or wipe out the reported 'dozens' of black snipers who displayed, as in the Detroit and Watts revolts of the 1960's, great ingenuity and manoeuvrability in their hit-and-run attacks, the heavily-armed troops and police resorted to indiscriminate shooting and arresting of blacks, further increasing the depth and breadth of the rebellion.

As in the revolts of the sixties, the Miami uprising was almost immediately joined by incidents and brief revolts in other cities. Less than 300 miles away, black people in Tampa, Florida revolted for two days. In Tallahassee, Florida, more than 2000 black students marched on the state capitol chanting 'McDuffie is dead, the cops are free, and that's what the rich call democracy!' Other incidents were also reported from Georgia, imperialist spokesman Jimmy Carter's 'home state', and

tension remains high in the areas where the uprising began, despite the withdrawal of National Guardsmen and promises from the Federal Government of 'investigations' into police racism.

The first major black rebellion of the 1960's began in the city of Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963, from where it spread northward, through the Harlem Revolt in 1964, to eventually encompass hundreds of cities. These uprising reached a peak in 1968, an integral part of the world-wide revolutionary upsurge of that same year that reached from the Tet Offensive in Vietnam to the General Strike in France. In that year, it was necessary to withdraw heavily-armed elite units, like the 101st Airborne Division, directly from the battlefield in Indochina where they were already being dealt powerful blows by the Vietnamese people, to put down the uprising in Detroit. In this city, less than 10% of the mainly-white Michigan National Guard reported for duty, when the uprising began, and numerous white workers and youth also took part in the revolt, reflecting the potential of the black struggle to develop into generalised class struggle. As the revolts reached their peak at the end of the decade, it was necessary for US imperialism to carry out a domestic 'Operation Phoenix' campaign of assassination and terror against black organisations, particularly those like the Black Panther Party which tended to give a higher political and military content to the mass revolts.

These are the undeniable facts which US imperialism has desperately tried to conceal, under the vicious propaganda about 'race riots', 'looters', and 'criminal elements'. They hysterically try to cover the implications of the fact that it is the proletarian sections of the black people which have everywhere given leadership to these revolts, and that where the proletarian composition was the highest – as in Detroit – the level and intensity of the revolt was also highest.

These are the facts which have been learned, at a bitter costs, by the emerging generation of black youth whose older brothers and sisters took part in the first wave of revolt in the sixties, and who are now growing up against the background of such international events as the Iranian, Zimbabwean, and Nicaraguan revolutions. A small but significant section of these youth already identify with these revolutions, as did the earlier generation with the Vietnamese and other anti-imperialist struggles at that time. This identification is reflected in the growing political activity of consciously anti-imperialist groups, including self-identified Communists, in the widespread anti-Klan movement and in the drive to unionise the southern states, two new crucial factors in the present situation, as well as those struggles which directly continue the desegregation and other civil rights thrusts of the sixties.

This new higher political consciousness and organisation is directly reflected in the higher level of mass violent resistance of the black people of Miami, whatever the particular activity or strengths of the groups immediately involved in Liberty City and the other black areas of Florida. The imperialist and racist ruling-class knows this full well and that is why they have launched, in the immediate period following the Miami Uprising, a new campaign aimed at all black organisations and leadership, even the most compromised and bankrupt. The events in Miami point directly to the motives, as well as the high imperialist circles responsible for, the attempted assassination of Vernon Jordan, the day after he warned of the threat from the right wing and announced a new voter-registration campaign in the South. Similarly, Reggie Jackson, a popular and widely-known black baseball player was shot at, but not hurt, in the week after the Miami Uprising, and James Meredith, a well-known black leader from the sixties, was assaulted and arrested by white police, also in the same approximate time period.

American Correspondent

WAR IN IRELAND

We are proud to publish the following interview with a former IRA volunteer. We are daily bombarded with ruling class propaganda attacking the Irish Republican Army – the military wing of the Provisional Republican movement.

This interview destroys the bourgeois myths. It shows why Irish men and women have once again taken up the gun to fight British imperialism. As the comrade puts it 'I realised that Britain was out to destroy Ireland completely'. The gun was taken up, not because of any 'romantic' attachment to violence – as bourgeois and petit bourgeois slanders would have it – but because it was a matter of life and death for the Irish people.

Discussing the military and political developments of the IRA the comrade reveals the truth about the IRA campaign. Far from being 'mad bombers and gunmen' the IRA are shown to be constantly refining their techniques and organisation in order to minimise the level of civilian deaths. The comrade exposes the way in which bomb warnings have been suppressed by the army and the RUC to provide British imperialism with cheap anti-IRA propaganda. Such is the value of Irish lives to imperialist hypocrites.

Throughout the interview we see the patient building up and organisation involved in waging a liberation war. We see the planning involved, the sacrifice demanded from the Volunteers, the level of commitment to the struggle and, therefore, the confirmation of the class character of the movement.

This interview gives us the reality of the revolutionary war for Irish national liberation. A reality a million miles away from the grotesque lies of the ruling class and the petit bourgeois left. We see that in Ireland, as in Zimbabwe, as in South Africa after Sharpeville, that the oppressed people reach a point where they have no choice but to take up arms – and then they fight to the bitter end. It is not a decision lightly taken but a necessity imposed on them by imperialism. As the comrade puts it, distilling the experience of the Irish people's struggle 'Don't lift the gun until you're ready to use it and don't stop using it until you've achieved exactly what you set out to do'.

Editorial Note: The following interview was given to us in December 1979 by a former Volunteer in the Provisional IRA. As a Volunteer he was engaged in military operations for three years before he was forced to go on the run. Two things should be emphasised about the interview. Firstly, the views expressed in the interview were given in a personal capacity and should not be taken as necessarily representing the views of any section of the Republican Movement. Secondly, as is made clear in the interview itself, much of what is said in the interview in relation to the IRA relates to an earlier period in the present struggle before the recent reorganisation of the IRA.



A VOLUNTEER'S ACCOUNT

FRFI: Could you explain how you initially became involved in the IRA?

CB: Well, it happened about five years ago. A man came to the house and asked me if I would hold on to some weapons – not a great amount of weapons but a pistol and a few other items – and I agreed. When he came to collect them some time later he asked me if I would give him a hand in transporting them, so we transported the weapons about two miles from the area where we had them. It was at this time that I became more involved and I met more Volunteers – of course I knew them from times when I'd maybe met them on the street but I'd never imagined their connections. I'd never given it much consideration prior to the time that I held the weapons, but after this small involvement – the small part I played in hiding weapons and holding on to them – I took a decision that I would like to do a bit more. I didn't consider full involvement at that stage but maybe more than what I was doing at that time – storing weapons and keeping them safe and maybe driving a car. So my involvement continued until the stage where I realised that I wanted to do more, and it was only a formality of actually being sworn into the IRA.

FRFI: Would you say that you joined the IRA for instinctive emotional reasons or was there more to it than that?

CB: I took time out to study the situation and I realised that Britain was out to destroy Ireland completely. Something had to be done to stop it and if this meant keeping the struggle going then if I could help in that struggle I would be there. It wasn't because somebody down the road got shot by the Brits, it was because I felt that Ireland was going to be destroyed if something wasn't done to prevent it. A British soldier is just another person to me, he's just another man doing a job but he's doing it on the other side of the fence: I'm on one side of the fence and he's on the other side of the fence and we've just got to decide who owns that fence. Most of the British soldiers in the North of Ireland possibly don't really want to be here. An awful lot of unemployed people in Britain are forced into the Army and into Northern Ireland. There are a few who like to be here and are having great fun, but of course those are the men who are sitting back telling the Privates to go out and walk up and down the streets of Belfast and Derry and they're not the ones who are getting hurt. How often do you hear of a Major being killed? It's a freak operation where maybe you'll catch one of them out. They like to stay indoors and keep well covered up – send the Privates out and let them get killed.

FRFI: When you said that you studied the situation you mean you studied it historically?

CB: Exactly, because it is an historic war. This past hundred years has seen a more activist response from the Irish people, where they've decided that enough is enough, and after a hundred years we have come a long way. Even in the fifties I would say that other countries possibly didn't realise what was going on here, but now the situation here is recognised – it's one country just trying to liberate itself.

FRFI: And this recognition has been won by the Republican Movement – other countries are now paying attention to the situation in this country because of the struggle of the Republican Movement?

CB: Yes, of course, but also through the political and military blunders that the British have made, such as Bloody Sunday.

FRFI: How strong was the IRA in your area at the time when you joined it?

CB: At that stage the IRA was slightly disorganised in the town that I lived in because we had a lot of young Volunteers but not enough superiors – not enough people with experience.

FRFI: Presumably no one had much experience at that stage since this was still quite early on in the struggle?

CB: That is true. At that time an awful lot of Volunteers were killed from explosives because they didn't have enough knowledge about the types of explosives and weapons that they were using – their capabilities and their weaknesses. Eventually these things were overcome, but at a great cost in terms of lives lost and operations that were unsuccessful. We had a lot of Volunteers at that time throughout different units – with maybe one unit consisting of fifteen men and possibly five units in the one town – but a lot of them were young and inexperienced, and a lot of them were going to end up in jail through their inexperience. The young Volunteers were just too young to manage the situation. We weren't capable of organising ourselves and we had nobody to tell us anything, and this cost a lot of lives. It was hard for the young Volunteers to get to know the veterans from the fifties: they were about the town but they weren't known to the young people and it possibly never struck the young people that it would be an advantage for them to know these men because they could give them some experience of what happened in their day – what to avoid and how to overcome problems. Training was absolutely nil at

this time – you were more or less given a fifteen minute briefing on what was to happen and you went into the operation. At the time when I was brought in what was taking place was mainly casual ambushes. We just picked a time to go out – we just said, 'right, seven o'clock to eight o'clock we'll do such-and-such a road'. The times were set and possibly never coincided with any British Army patrols because patrols were never timed. This went on for about six months or so, to the point where organisation became a great necessity. Organisation eventually came from a much higher level – possible GHQ noticed the mishaps and the operations that were half pulled off which are never heard about. So a re-organisation took place: help came to us, arms began flowing into the town far more easily, and Volunteers were ready and able to fill the positions of those who had either left or been killed or captured. Operations were planned from higher up and passed on to us and we worked on them from there.

FRFI: So your area became more co-ordinated with other areas?

CB: Yes, exactly. People were instructed to come down to this area and help us out with our problems. We carried out a few operations with them and we found a great change – organisation and co-ordination were first-class. We were learning from men who had been given full training – not only physical training and weaponry training but also mental training to a degree where they were capable of withstanding the interrogation techniques used by the Brits. We found after a period of three or four months with these people that operations could be carried out perfectly and far more safely. At the moment the area is functioning perfectly – it has never functioned so well in the ten years of the struggle – and this is also true of other parts of the North of Ireland.

FRFI: What kinds of targets were your operations mainly directed towards?

CB: Well, economic targets and military targets – imperialist targets – were the two main targets. But after the re-organisation it generally happened on a wide scale where there would be a GHQ decision that the entire six counties of the North would be hit – it wouldn't be done on a small-scale basis where maybe only one area would be hit. In planning operations a certain section of the unit was chosen to work out hits against the RUC and the Brits, while another section was chosen to find out all the premises which have connections with the British Army and economic targets which are draining the country – people who are directly



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involved with the economic problems that exist in Ireland. When operations actually took place they were carefully co-ordinated. In every operation carried out there are a hundred small details that are important because without them the operation can't take place. So one mistake can cause an awful lot of damage: it just takes one person to make one small mistake and he can affect a complete twelve-month period of operations. Every man is scared when he goes on an operation—if you say you're not there's something wrong with you because if you're going out to throw your life on the table you've got to be very sick if you're not scared to do it. But being scared means that you're very alert and very aware of everything that's happening around you—you're in a state of mind to expect anything—and once you're like that you can handle a situation as it comes and you'll not panic. Men were also selected for particular operations according to what they were best at—for example a man may be better with a rifle than he is with a bomb, whereas for bombings men were selected who had good experience in the use of explosives.

FRFI: Did you personally specialise in anything?
CB: Well, I had a tendency to lean towards explosives more than weapons—I never claimed to be a great man at using a weapon. After a very detailed training programme with explosives I felt very safe with them. I didn't feel over-confident, but I felt that I could make bombs just like making my tea—once you knew what you were doing you were safe. The material would be supplied but I'd make the devices myself and use them to the best advantage. I can safely claim around 15 to 20 successful bombings. Most of the targets that I was hitting were RUC barracks or commercial targets or premises directly connected with the occupation forces, where maybe they were using the premises as an observation post or buying things there—and anybody who will sell goods to the British Army will sell information. The area where I was bombing was a particularly good area because you had a full view of every position—you could walk in and walk out almost casually and walk away from the scene. There were various targets that were not meant—a bomb can be too small or it can be too big and other places do become affected, such as having their windows shattered and roofs cracked. But I can't put down bombing—in the right hands bombing is a very effective way of hitting. If you kill a soldier the British government have to bury him at the expense of a mere £200 or £250—they throw a Union Jack over him and throw him in a hole and it's over in a few minutes and forgotten about—whereas the British govern-

ment have to pay out millions of pounds every year as compensation for property that's been destroyed—and the only reason they're pumping that into the country is because what they're pumping out of it must be unbelievable.

FRFI: Could you say something about developments in weaponry and explosives in the IRA over the last few years?

CB: You can compare it to driving a car—the more you drive it the more experience you get and the more confident you are of it doing what you want it to do. It's the same with using a weapon or explosives—you learn how to handle it and control it and how to use it more effectively. Of course you can't expect the war to be fought with .303's—it could have been in 1916 but now more sophisticated weapons have been made available to Volunteers, such as the modified Armalite—the M16 version of the Armalite—and the AK47. Five or six years ago one unit might have had to forfeit all its arms to another unit for different operations and the weapons would often be such as the old .45 and the .303 Lee-Enfield. Now more sophisticated weapons are being supplied to the Volunteers and they are being supplied in greater quantities. As regards explosives, the men themselves in the ranks of the IRA are making these sophisticated devices from their own knowledge—they are trained in depth how to use electronics in explosive devices. The remote-controlled bomb is a fairly common device at the moment. Four years ago it was a pretty dangerous device since car radios and similar things would set them off. Now they have obviously perfected these devices and you've seen the result—the Warrenpoint attack, for example, where they could destroy eighteen British soldiers without one civilian ever having a hangover after it. The bomb on the Camlough Road the other day and the bomb in the same area some time ago which killed the four RUC men were also perfect examples of well-controlled and co-ordinated operations, with timing absolutely perfect so that civilian life is not endangered.

FRFI: So one advantage of the remote-controlled devices is that you can be very precise and so avoid endangering civilians?

CB: Exactly. You can postpone detonating a device if civilians happen to be in the area. You can let a particular patrol pass by—if the time isn't right when the first patrol passes you can always wait for a second patrol. If you take those three examples I gave you, the devices were all positioned on a part of the road where civilian life would be in least danger and on the three occasions civilian life was not in any real danger. Remote-controlled devices are a very valuable method of hitting the British Army. A sniper, who is an expert, can go out three times and kill three soldiers, whereas with remote-controlled devices—although this is also an expert's job—you can hit the British Army on a bigger scale. There are unfortunate incidents where civilians are killed or injured, but, as everybody realises, this is war: lives are lost on both sides—that is the result of war, it does result in the loss of lives. The Volunteers appreciate the co-operation they get from the general public and the Republican Army definitely keeps as low a profile as possible to ensure no danger to civilian life. The same cannot be said of the British Army or the RUC—they'll shoot left, right and centre. I can remember one occasion where two Volunteers attacked an RUC patrol and the RUC went totally berserk and fired into a market area with a machine gun.

FRFI: It has also been claimed that the RUC have deliberately failed to pass on warnings about bombs to the public.

CB: I've experienced that myself on a few occasions. We used a warning technique that was unique in that certain codes were used to identify ourselves, and sometimes we found that the warnings were never actually issued—the RUC would get the warning but they would completely ignore it.

FRFI: Why do you think they ignored the warnings?

CB: Obviously for propaganda reasons: there would be a report in the papers, 'No-warning bomb explodes'. The Brits have always relied on propaganda. The Irish people can see straight through it because the Irish have lived with this situation for hundreds of years and they're wary of the British and their methods of propaganda. So the British are only using these methods to try to

impress people in European countries and the United States.

FRFI: Don't you think that they also use these methods to try to alienate the local people from you by trying to portray you as 'mad bombers' who use indiscriminate methods and don't care about civilian lives?

CB: Well, they would have a very hard job if that is their intention. It wouldn't be easy for them in a nationalist area: the only person that they might get is the person who is sitting on the fence.

FRFI: Another aspect of British propaganda is that the war in Ireland is often portrayed in Britain as being a sectarian religious war. How would you respond to that?

CB: I have never encountered sectarianism in the Republican Movement, either in the Army or in Sinn Féin. Sectarianism doesn't exist in the Republican Movement, and I'm glad about that because as a matter of fact I'm half-Protestant myself, if you can say that, because my mother was a Protestant and in fact I was born in England. I don't believe in sectarianism, and I believe that the Protestants will eventually be willing to come to terms with the Catholics. The British are only giving privileges to the loyalists to keep them on their way of thinking—that the border must remain. At the end of the day, when Britain gets out of Ireland, the Protestants in the North of Ireland won't get anything from Britain—the British government's attitude will be that they can go to hell because it won't have any need for them any longer.

FRFI: What is your view of the situation in the South of Ireland?

CB: The people in the North of Ireland have always been aware of the situation that exists in Ireland. From the moment the border was created the people in the North were aware of the border and the oppression that exists. But the people in the



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South don't realise that the oppression actually comes down on them too, since Britain is coming into the Republic of Ireland through the back door—the border with the North of Ireland—and draining the wealth out of the South. The British have got big economic investments in the South of Ireland so they cannot afford to lose that border: it must stay to help them continue to drain the wealth out of our country. So the people in the South are directly affected by the British occupation of the North but they can't see it. They put the blame on the Fianna Fail government, but they don't realise that the real oppressors are the British who are draining the wealth out of Ireland and causing its economic problems. They know they are oppressed but they don't feel it as coming from Britain. A lot of the young people in the South are now starting to take an interest in the situation in Ireland but many people in the South still do not really understand what has happened and what is happening in Ireland. Every time there is an

election in the South the politicians pull the wool over the eyes of the people and say that they want to see a united Ireland and that they intend to fight politically for a united Ireland: this takes a lot of people in and they vote for Fianna Fail. An awful lot of people in the South do not fully understand what Republicanism means—that Republicanism in the eyes of Sinn Féin means socialism. Sinn Féin are trying to develop policies for when the unification of Ireland is achieved so that the system will work in everybody's favour and we can invest in our own resources instead of allowing Britain to come in and take the wealth out of our country.

FRFI: Obviously most of the Volunteers in the IRA are working class people and the eventual victory of the IRA in liberating the country will mean the liberation of the working class in Ireland. It's been suggested that that victory will also be of great benefit to the British working class. Would you agree with that?

CB: When the struggle does re-unite Ireland—and obviously it will do so eventually—we can foresee working class people in Britain not maybe taking up arms but certainly coming together more to challenge the British government. That will eventually come about but it's a long-term prospect—it took an awful long time for it to develop in this country.

FRFI: It's been suggested that black people in Britain in particular will increasingly fight back because they are the most oppressed section of the working class, and in fact they are oppressed in a similar way to the nationalist working class in the North of Ireland: they not only suffer most from poverty and unemployment but they are also physically attacked by the British state—the police on several occasions have moved in and attacked black areas.

CB: Well, if it wasn't for Britain's involvement in other countries a hundred years ago those black people probably wouldn't be in Britain now—they would have developed their own resources and they would be as far advanced as Britain. Britain put her nose in every country that she could. She went to India and Africa, just like she went to Ireland, to drain their resources—their diamonds, their gold, their oil and everything else that it was possible to take out of the country. They went with one intention—not to help the development of those countries but to drain their resources. The capitalists in Britain today are all as guilty as the people who originally went to India and Africa: their riches are all paid for with the bones of dead men—Irishmen, Indians and Africans. So black people in Britain are only doing exactly what they're entitled to do because Britain went to their countries and drained them and left them with absolutely nothing but poverty and ruin.

FRFI: So do you see a similarity between the struggle of black people in Britain and the struggle in Ireland?

CB: Yes, but I think if black people in Britain turn round and revolt now they would be open to criticism because they would not really be ready. Don't lift the gun until you're ready to use it and don't stop using it until you've achieved exactly what you set out to do.

FRFI: Do you feel depressed that the struggle in Ireland has gone on for so long and it looks as if it will go on for quite a long time yet?

CB: Feeling depressed is only admitting defeat to yourself. You don't get depressed if you maintain your bitterness for the British government—not for the British people, although, as James Connolly once said, if they support the system which is maintaining the occupation of our country they are responsible for that occupation.

FRFI: Finally, how do you think your own involvement in the struggle has affected you personally?

CB: I've possibly learned in the four or five years of my involvement with the Republican Movement what most men will never learn in a lifetime—the experience of different emotions, feelings and fears. It's a tremendous thing to experience every kind of emotion and to understand death, life, freedom and oppression—all in the space of four years. Nine times out of ten people who have been in a war come back as changed people. You can never really be free of it—after it's all over you're still thinking about it and it'll always be on your mind. But I would do the same thing again and again and again if it had to be done.

POLICE MURDER

The police have always been able to get away with murder. Their brutality on the streets and in the police cells is covered up by all the institutions of the state – the courts, coroners courts, government spokesmen and the media. It is covered up because it is sanctioned at the highest levels of the British state. The ruling class has never been in any doubt about the function of its police force – to keep down the oppressed and exploited. And if in the course of forcing the oppressed and exploited to endure the unendurable the police kill or maim people then they have no fear – they know that their paymasters will bring a machinery of lies, deception and trickery into play to protect them.

Only on the rarest of occasions is this deception exposed. Recently Birmingham police shot and critically wounded a 16-year-old pregnant girl. Yet for 15 hours the police persistently maintained that she had been shot by the man who was holding her hostage. Only the fact that he was carrying a shotgun and she had suffered bullet *not* shotgun wounds forced them to concede the truth. The police had shot her.

The lengths to which the state will go in protecting its police were well-illustrated in three recent cases – Henry Floyd, James Kelly and Blair Peach. In those three cases it was a Coroners Court which was the instrument used to conceal the truth. Despite massive and obvious evidence of police guilt the Coroners Court brought in verdicts of 'misadventure' in the case of James Kelly and Blair Peach, and 'suicide' for Henry Floyd. The British state obviously recognises that as its attacks on the working class and oppressed intensify it will increasingly need the services of Coroners Courts to conceal its murders and atrocities. That is why at the very time of the Blair Peach inquest the Home Secretary announced that a new verdict is being introduced into Coroners Courts. That new verdict is 'killed lawfully'.



Henry Floyd

At about 3.00pm on 23 August 1979, 26-year-old Nigerian Henry Floyd died in police custody. This is an extract from the coroners proceedings:

Coroner: 'Did you hit him?'

PC Hake: 'Yes'

Coroner: 'What with?'

PC Hake: 'When he got hold of my finger I told him to let go but as he would not do so I hit him on the head. I could not get a punch in but it had the desired effect. When the handcuffs were put on he quietened down.'

After this beating Henry was taken to the West End Central Police Station. Within 16 hours he was dead. The police witnesses claimed Henry was found 'hanging' in the detention room. A 'football type sock' was 'found' by the police sergeant on duty. Faithful to the police account, the coroner recorded a verdict of suicide.

Suicide! A black man is arrested on suspicion of possessing a stolen credit card. The police admit to hitting him and then, *very conveniently* for the police, the black man commits suicide! Deception and cover-ups are no strangers to the coroners courts, especially when the police need a hand in a tricky situation.

James Kelly

As with Henry Floyd, the inquest into the death of Irishman James Kelly reached a verdict that let off the police. The cause of James Kelly's death was found to be 'misadventure due to heart failure'. James Kelly had 30-40 bruises, two broken ribs and a smashed vertebra, and his jaw was fractured in two places. Even if James Kelly was a young man in robust health he might expect some heart trouble after being run down by a police car, after being kicked and punched all over the body, after having his jaw smashed and his back broken!

After 9 months of denial PC Evans admitted at the inquest to punching James Kelly. He also admitted to 'helping' James Kelly get into the back of the police car by grabbing hold of his testicles. Evans claimed that James Kelly managed to get out of the car by somersaulting over the front seat and out of the driver's door! Evans also claimed to have sprained his wrist while trying to resuscitate James Kelly. James Kelly's ribs were broken in the course of this 'heart massage'. Heart massage by police boot more like!

The police did everything to prevent evidence appearing before the jury. The overwhelming eye-witness evidence was that the police viciously beat up James Kelly. The police refused to release the witness statements made to them. The police claimed that the statements were police property! The few witnesses who claimed that the arresting policeman struck no blows were directly contradicted by PC Evans' admission. Evans and the other arresting officers did not have to admit much else. The statements that they made to an internal police inquiry were deliberately withheld by the coroner. The police claimed special 'privilege' for their officers. So much for the 'exhaustive' inquest! The police internal inquiry was a cover-up job. Assistant Chief Constable Gerty of the West Midlands Police led this inquiry. He failed to interview several key witnesses. Gerty took statements made to the Merseyside police and copied these straight onto West Midland police statement forms! So much for his independent inquiry!

Cover Up

The very conduct of the coroners proceedings showed that they too were a cover up. Dr Benstead, the first of three pathologists to medically examine James Kelly's corpse, found only minor bruises and abrasions. Benstead is employed by the Home Office. It was only after

the Kelly family called in a second pathologist, Dr John Torry, that it was discovered that James Kelly's jaw was broken. Dr Torry met obstruction from the police officers present at the mortuary when he examined the corpse. Further interference came from the coroners office which prevented him from taking specimens away for laboratory tests.

The Merseyside police called in Professor Usher, himself a senior police surgeon, for a third pathologist's opinion. The police refused to release 29 pages out of Usher's 65 page report. Why? Because the report contains 'privileged' information supplied by the police. An unreleased section states

'Since both policemen were carrying their truncheons at the time, it seems unlikely that either of them would need to take a further weapon from the car.'

Both policemen had truncheons. Yet one truncheon, that of PC Evans, was never forensically examined. At the inquest the police version according to Assistant Chief Constable Gerty was that Evans did *not* have a truncheon. One witness had a very clear view of the arrest. He saw one officer crouch down to hold James Kelly while the second policeman hit him. The policeman's arm had gone up and down three or four times in a clubbing motion, as though he had a weapon in his hand. Why would the police want to make PC Evans' truncheon disappear?



At the inquest members of the James Kelly Action Committee queued for seats, only to be turned away by the police. The number of public places had been cut from 20 to 10! The hearings were frequently delayed as the barristers representing the Police Federation and the Chief Constable went into long consultation to check they had the story straightened out. The jury visited the area in Huyton where James Kelly was beaten up. During this outing a press photographer with the *Liverpool Echo* newspaper had his film seized by the police. So much for open British justice!

Blair Peach

At least seven people saw the police kill Blair Peach. The inquest revealed, not who killed Blair Peach, but that the British state is prepared to protect individual police murderers.

That is why Dr John Burton, the coroner, refused to produce the report of the police inquiry into Blair Peach's death. Telfer, a senior officer on the inquiry, refused to answer a direct question. He was asked did the report suggest that one particular police officer might be open to charges. Backing up Telfer, Dr Burton refused to release the report on the grounds that if such a confidential report was published it would be the last time that one would be written.

When the Asian people of Southall took to the streets the imperialist state responded with massive repression. In Beechcroft Avenue the police charged and brutally struck down anybody they could. Blair Peach was murdered as a result. Of course, the 38 Special Patrol Group officers called as witnesses at the inquest all denied the use of truncheons. Of course, the police claim that all their coshes, crow bars and pick axe handles are nothing more than 'momentoes'! Of course, there were open contradictions in the police evidence. Even in

the tightly knit SPG a total lie cannot be perfectly coordinated. These bloody murderers have no need to admit to their crimes, for they enjoy the protection of the British state.

The police will only be maintained as an effective instrument of repression if their morale is kept up. They must have the confidence that they will be protected when they murder for the British state. Manchester Chief Constable Anderton states as much in his last annual report:

'How much is "necessary force" is a constantly recurring question the answer to which is as vital to morale and effectiveness of the police as it is for the safety and in the interests of the public.'

The necessity of the police to crush the resistance of the oppressed is a point much laboured by Dr Burton. Dr Burton made it clear to the jury that the police murder of Blair Peach could not be deemed as 'unlawful killing'. Unlawful killing by the police has to be deliberate and unnecessary:

'It's necessary to use sufficient force to overcome all resistance. You see, the force you use (as a policeman at Southall) has got to be effective. I'm not suggesting that you intentionally kill people, nobody's suggesting that, but the force had got to be effective.'

These words are an unashamed justification for the police murder of Blair Peach. Murder is justified, according to Dr Burton, if it occurs as part of repression against the resistance of the oppressed workers.

Fairy tales

The fact that the police commit murder and the courts cover up for them comes as no surprise to the oppressed. They have experienced first-hand the violence of the police and the injustice of the courts.

Only those who have an interest in peddling the myth of British democracy could maintain otherwise. It is timely to recall the words of petit bourgeois socialist, Paul Foot, who wrote in *Socialist Worker* (25 May 1979) after the Southall events:

'Decent minded policeman and there are lots of them are often shocked at the bullying and racialism which is permitted and even encouraged in street patrols.'

And

'Police often do help people.'

Really, Mr Foot? Often help people? Often 'help people' to death more like!

The logic of this view was fully drawn out by Jack Woodis of the Communist Party of Great Britain who argued that there is a need for

'... a dialogue between the democratic movement and the police personnel.'

And

'... real democratic control and supervision in which the people, through their organisations and elected representatives, become the bodies to which the police are accountable.'

At a time when the police are becoming even more nakedly the armed wing of the butcher British state, the petit bourgeois socialists have rushed into the breach and attempted to cover this fact up. Anything, any view, no matter how absurd, (and there could be none more absurd than the notion of democratically controlling an imperialist police force) rather than to let the solution which is *already* clear to the oppressed, to black people in particular, gain wider influence in the working class. That solution is to fight back, to fight back and destroy the imperialist state and all its military and police apparatus.

'Dialogues' with 'decent minded' policemen, 'democratic control' of the police, disbanding the SPG – all those are fairy tales. Such fairy tales are an insult to the memory of James Kelly, Henry Floyd, Blair Peach and the countless others who have died at the hands, boots and coshes of the police.

Andy Goddard

LETTERS

FRFI welcomes your letters. They should be sent to the Editor, 49 Raiton Road London SE24 0LN. We may, on occasions, cut letters for reasons of space.

Dear Comrade,
I am writing to you for some information on the Revolutionary Communist Group, and an application for membership form, I have always bought your FRFI paper when I have seen it at the few demos I have been on. I read your No10 Hands Off Ireland booklet and found the interview with Sean MacStiofain most interesting.

At present I am a member of the Young Communist League. I will be 18 in June, when I would have been able to join the CP but I am in disagreement with a lot of their policies – particularly on Ireland. I feel that the path outlined in the 'British Road to Socialism' won't materialize, and which ever example I look at no country has ever progressed to Socialism without an armed struggle of some kind. (The only exception being Chile, and we all know what happened there.) I believe Britain will be no exception. I resent the hypocrisy of the CP on its 'Soviet troops out of Afghanistan – British troops in Ireland' stand. And so feel I could hardly join them.

Can you help me please?

Douglas Ryan
Bristol

The Editor,
Thank you for your support, and help. We love the articles you put in the paper in every issue. They tell the truth not like the normal local and national papers.

You supported us from the start of the campaign. We hope you will support us to the end. We will always remember you.

Our victory will be your victory. You carry on the struggle and we will be successful.

Anwar Ditta
Shuja UdDin

Dear Comrades

The Student Union at this college recently passed a resolution which contained the following proposals: 1). to give political support for your campaign to publicise what is happening in Northern Ireland. 2). to ask for the National Union of Students to give support to the HOI defence campaign and to publicise it. Also to discuss what help the NUS Executive can give of either a material or political nature to the HOI Defence Fund. 3). to write a letter to the local MP of this area, asking him to give political support against the police censorship of your defence campaign, and to help raise the issue publicly.

We hope that you are successful in your attempts to defeat police and state censorship of what is really happening in Ireland. And we pledge our unconditional support to your campaign.

For and on behalf of the Student Body
Chris Burbridge
Secretary, Students' Union
Coleg Harlech
Harlech, Gwynedd

Dear Comrade,
I bought a copy of FRFI at Alexandra Palace on Sunday last. I have read many newspapers which are alleged to be 'Socialist' or 'Left Wing' amongst them the 'Morning Star' 'Socialist Challenge', 'Socialist Worker', 'Tribune' and 'Militant', etc. etc. But I must congratulate you for producing a truly Revolutionary newspaper. FRFI is the only newspaper I know that openly supports the struggles of ethnic minorities in Britain and Ireland and it helps to expose the savagery and brutal repression inflicted daily on Republican Freedom Fighters in the north of Ireland. Keep up the good work!

Thank you,
Yours fraternally
J.L. Kettering

To Revolutionary Communist Group
Dear Sir,
Re Scottish Zimbabwe Refugee Resettlement Project
'The Mobile Clinic'

Following the 15 year war in Zimbabwe, the health service in the rural areas has completely broken down. There is therefore urgent need for this service to be restored as the million war refugees are resettled. The problem has been made worse by the rainy season which is associated with the spread of tropical diseases like Malaria etc.

We need all the help we can get now to solve this human predicament. We could leave them to die without your help.

It is for the above reason and for disease prevention that we are launching the **Mobile Clinic Project**. The estimated cost for the project is between £8500 and £10,000. So far we have raised £500 to start the project.

We are therefore kindly appealing for financial donations from you. We hope you assist generously.

All donations to be sent to:

Treasurer
Mr M Mutego
7 Grosvenor Crescent
Glasgow G12 9AE
Yours faithfully
Brian Rufu Munakira
(Branch Secretary)

Dear FRFI

The recent shocking revelations concerning the use of 'Agent Orange' by the criminal American imperialists in Vietnam during their war of aggression there, illustrates the enormity of the horrible war crimes committed against the Vietnamese people and must constitute one of the greatest crimes of the 20th century.

The United States of America stands condemned among the nations of the world as the

greatest perpetrator of mass-murders and crimes against humanity. Throughout its 200 years of existence as a nation compared to these crimes the atrocities of the Nazis during World War II seem comparatively insignificant.

The history of the US is one which is indeed written in blood, for this 'great' nation was built upon the extermination of millions of human beings – the true indigenous peoples of N. America, contemptuously referred to as 'savages' and 'Red Indians' by the White Anglo Saxon Protestant (WASP) American settlers – today the survivors, a mere handful, have been systematically rounded up and thrown into concentration camps known as 'reservations'. US foreign policy consists of taking over the role of the British empire of old as the main imperialist force at work in the world, seeking world domination and the exploitation and subjugation of human beings and the imposition of the capitalist, racist Anglo-Saxon culture throughout the world; all under the pretext of 'protecting the free world' from communism. Every distasteful, racist, fascist regime in the world is now actively supported, financed and armed by the US – this supposedly 'democratic', 'freedom-loving' country.

The American nation and its criminal leaders, from Washington down to Carter, has a lot to answer for and they will continue to feel the wrath of the peoples of the 3rd world, of which the Iranian episode is an example. And, moreover, the international community should demand that the criminal American government pay war reparations to the peoples of Indo-China for its war crimes, which it has failed to do under Article 21 of the Paris agreement.

Yours faithfully
P Jones
London N17

Dear FRFI,

This is about the racism in Catford Boys School. When the racists there shout at us 'Zigger Zigger kill a nigger' and 'Nigger nigger lick my boots' they are protected by racist teachers. When we fight back teachers say we are taking the law into our own hands, but there's no point in telling racist teachers about racism. Kids who fight back get caned. If you refuse the cane teachers can lock you up in a little room. One of us has been locked up for 1 hour like this. Others get sent to psychiatrists or special schools.

More black kids are expelled, suspended, detained and intimidated than white boys. This is a way of stopping them from getting an education. We are also allowed no property like red/green/gold belts, scarfs, badges, hats or afro combs. There is no excuse for this. It is a way the racists are trying to stop us showing our colours.

Photos are taken of everyone for identity purposes, teachers also hide and photo kids mucking about or smoking. One boy was photoed just for carrying a bike wheel. Where are these photos now? We know there is a link between Catford Boys and Catford Police. The teachers use the photos like the police use mug-shots.

Britain defends the racists in South Africa who kill the school kids. The same could happen in Britain.

Kick the racists out of Catford Boys! Victory to the school kids in South Africa!

Pupils and ex-pupils of Catford Boys (South London)

ST PAULS RACIST COURTS

34 people faced the racist courts in Bristol on the 16th and 18th June on charges connected to the uprising in St. Paul's on the 2nd April. Many people came to support their brothers and sisters and packed out the court. But the state was clearly prepared. Police vans were outside the courts and over 10 police guarded the doors to the court room. They questioned everyone who went into the public gallery. But the court, police and legal proceedings, all designed to intimidate the people, did not succeed in doing so.

The youth refused to remove their hats when it was demanded that they do so by the police, who even threatened them with arrest if they didn't. One person who wasn't wearing one put

one on! The people did not stand up in the public gallery when the magistrates came in and left the court room, even when demanded to do so by the clerk of the court. As more people gathered outside the court room the police looked noticeably on edge and nervous.

Most cases are delayed – Police are attempting to frame the youth.

Only 4 cases were actually taken, the rest were put off yet again. The 4 taken were for charges of looting and receiving. The state had obviously decided to come down heavy – one woman who was accused of stealing two jars of coffee was fined £125. It is clearly a purposeful tactic of the police and the courts to delay and delay the other cases. Most of the people appearing before the court had appeared at least 3 times before. They hope that as time goes on there will be less and less support and less of a public eye. It is also designed to give them more time to invent their stories and concoct their 'evidence'. Most of the people arrested with such charges as Threatening Behaviour Likely to Cause a Breach of the Peace, were not arrested on the night but some time after, some as long as six weeks later!!! It is therefore understandable that the charges do not specify a time or a place. The police have no idea themselves! The defence lawyers demanded to have more information concerning these details for how could they conduct a defence when the arrested didn't even know where or when s/he was accused of committing the crime? The

prosecution predictably refused and the Magistrates backed up the police lawyer all the way through, and their 'right' to refuse any information.

But it's not just the local cops who are deciding on the frame-ups. That great defender of the British imperialist state – the Director for Public Prosecutions is involved. At least 9 of the charges have been referred to the DPP for consideration of bringing 'more serious' charges. 2 months after the uprising, the British state is considering more serious charges! The British state is out to ensure that the youth are criminalised, out to crush the resistance by imposing as heavy fines and as long imprisonment as they can get away with. But they won't succeed – greater repression brings forth greater resistance.

Drop All Charges!

The cases have been delayed to the following dates:

4 July, 8 July, 9 July, 11 July, 29 July and 30 June. On the 28 July the cases come up which were referred to the DPP. All at Bristol Magistrates Courts, Nelson Street, Bristol.

Send donations to:
United Defence Fund,
Albert Villas,
Grosvenor Road,
St. Paul's

ADVERTISEMENT

Race Today

The May/June issue of **Race Today** features the first part of a three part series on Blacks and the British police. It is titled 'From Bobby to Babylon'. It traces the development of the struggles waged by blacks against police malpractice in the last 25 years.

'From Bobby to Babylon' is written by Darcus Howe, editor of Race Today. For your copy send 50p to Race Today, 74, Shakespeare Road, London SE24 0PT. The whole series will be produced in pamphlet form at a later date.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST No9 Racism, Imperialism and the Working Class

This article shows how racism is rooted in imperialism and that it is the British imperialist state which today is carrying out the most massive and systematic attack on black people. The article concludes that, with the deepening crisis, British imperialism can only intensify racial oppression and meet all resistance with increased repression. An anti-racist movement can only be built by uncompromising struggle against imperialism and its agents in the working class.

Price 50p + 20p p&p
From RCG Publications Ltd
49 Raiton Road, London SE24 0LN

PRISON NEWS



PRESS ASSOCIATION

D-WING THE MEAN MACHINE

On Tuesday 24 June 1980 five prisoners from the maximum security D-Wing of Wormwood Scrubs climbed onto the laundry house roof in protest against the vicious prison conditions. The five included an Irish PoW serving life, Ronnie MacCartney, a black comrade and three other prisoners. All are serving long sentences. They erected planks painted with slogans: 'Remember August 31', 'MUFTI Mad Dogs', POA rule by brutes' (POA - Prison Officer Authority), 'D Wing - the Mean Machine'.

When comrades from Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! and PROP, the national prisoners' movement waved and shouted their solidarity to the five from outside the prison, the police warned us 'Communication of that sort is not in the interest of anyone!' Not in the interest of the British state's lie machine you mean! The five called out their names to us - John Wood, Ronnie MacCartney, William Webb, Keith Kelly and Micky Morris. They

were protesting against the MUFTI squads, the constant screw brutality, the continuation of the disgusting conditions. By their courageous act they let the British working class know that, behind those prison walls, a regime of brutality and intimidation, is being resisted. Having broken the wall of silence, the five decided to descend at 3.30pm on Wednesday 25 June.

All their accusations are confirmed in the letter from Scrubs prisoners printed on this

page. This letter relates the horrifying conditions, the sadism of the cowardly thug screws, the uneatable food, the atmosphere of tension boiling ever since August. At 5pm on 31 August, about 220 prisoners held a peaceful sit-in on the first floor of D-Wing. They were protesting at the introduction of new regulations imposed by the Home Office. These regulations cut down on so-called 'privileges' and restricted the amount of personal money that prisoners are allowed. This amounted to an escalation of the petty harassment which aims at making life intolerable for the 250 long-term D-Wing prisoners. In addition, visits were being restricted, particularly for Irish Republican POWs. At 10.00pm the screws locked the prisoners out of their cells on the landings and the MUFTI squad, armed with four foot staves and dressed in full riot gear with helmets and boots, attacked the peaceful protestors. 69 men required stitches. At least 53 were seriously injured. 122 prisoners were charged with 'disciplinary offences' and 22 placed in segregation. This attack on defenceless prisoners by 'Her Majesty's' thugs typifies the British imperialist prison system.

It is well known that within this vicious set-up, Irish POWs are systematically victimised to an even greater degree. *Eddie Butler and Hugh Doherty have now been in solitary confinement since February 1978.* Earlier this year Guiseppe Conlon became the fifth Irish political prisoner to be murdered in British prisons since 1974. Chronically ill and deliberately neglected, Guiseppe was held at the Scrubs in appalling conditions for five years until the prison system killed him finally on 23 January. Beatings, abuse, provocation, solitary and loss of remission are used to harass the political prisoners in particular, both black and Irish. The average screw is a racist, anti-Irish, psychopathic thug specially hired for these qualities by the Home Office. Where beatings and solitary fail to break a prisoner, the use of

mind-wrecking drugs comes next. The 'liquid cosh' is in regular use throughout the prison system to destroy resistance.

Control units are also in regular use, supposedly banned by the Home Office, but simply renamed. Irish POW Ray MacLaughlin was held for 6-7 weeks in Wakefield Control Unit - 'F Block' - in 1978 in a white-washed cell, cut off from all sound and unable to tell what time of day it was. He emerged unbroken but *unable to speak* as a result.

The political movement in British prisons against such imperialist repression is clearly growing. The long term prisoners are prominent in the struggle against this regime. Black prisoners and Irish POWs are in the forefront of this bitter fight to defend the interests of the prisoners. The Home Office expressed its concern recently that IRA POWs lead many prison protests for better conditions. Their reputation is enormous in British jails and their courage wins them great respect particularly when the protests achieve results. It is no small concern for British imperialism holding 46,000 prisoners, increasingly politicised and increasingly embittered, that political leaders are emerging in the prisons.

On the outside too, British imperialism is rocking from the blows inflicted by the Republican Movement and fears the growing anger of the black working class. The ruling class is preparing the way for a political crisis, preparing for a time when its prisons will be increasingly used for political prisoners. Anti-imperialists have a duty to support the struggles of prisoners in British prisons. They suffer the greatest penalties for the protest they engage in. They are part of the growing movement of resistance against British imperialist repression inside and outside British jails.

Tony Sheridan

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER FROM PRISONERS IN WORMWOOD SCRUBS

We wish to draw your attention to the recent riot which took place at the above-named prison. We can assure you the contents of this letter are without a doubt perfectly true in every word. At least 50 inmates were seriously injured, as you know an enquiry is taking place but we are afraid here that eventually it will be swept under the carpet again. To relieve the anxiety in here the establishment transferred several inmates to various prisons throughout the country, they exchanged most of them on a one for one basis. We came here after the riot and to be quite honest, we have had a terrible time, we have been provoked time and time again for no reason. We have constantly been interviewed by the Board of Visitors and they tell us they know full well the happenings in here, but much to their regret their hands are tied. Another point, even prison visitors have been disposed of, to avoid the public getting to know the full facts of the riot and what's happened since. There is no doubt whatsoever that the tension in here is at boiling point again, and we are afraid that a repetition of the Hull Riot is imminent.

Quite recently a prison officer, returned from his lunch break drunk, he then attacked an inmate. This attack was completely unprovoked and uncalled for. Once again this was swept under the carpet.

There has got to be a thorough investigation into this prison. At the moment the governor has definitely lost control. For example, the other morning we went down for our breakfast at 9.50am because the officers decided to have a meeting. We ask you to bear in mind our last meal was 4.30pm the previous day. When we asked the reason for this, they more or less laughed at us. We demand a more open approach to the public and to let them know just what goes on in this prison, as the situation is very grave indeed. The public just don't know how serious it is. There must be a public enquiry. We are very adamant about this. This matter must be pursued until the air is ventilated.

One of the main things that is the cause of a lot of the unrest is the food. It is no better than pig's swill, we have constantly complained about this. Nothing has been done about it. Just the other week we had visiting magistrates at the prison. They couldn't give us enough to eat. It's the same every time someone from the outside visits the prison. Instead of showing these people what they serve up daily, they make out that we get the meals that they see everyday. Then when we complain to the Visiting Magistrates about the food, we get no results, simply because the prison authorities are allowed to pull the wool over their eyes.

From start to finish the riot and what's happened since has been a complete cover-up from top to bottom. At first they told the press that there had been trouble at this prison but nobody had been hurt. They denied that they ever had a special squad of prison officers, then they released the news that 54 inmates had been injured. They also tell us that they have got a special squad. Why? The truth of the matter is they don't want the true facts to come out in the open. The prison adjudication procedure must be thoroughly scrutinised. We are under the impression the officers here go out of their way to try and create further trouble and give us problems to enable them to turn round and put the blame on the inmates. We the inmates here collectively would like the Home Secretary to come to this prison personally listen to us the inmates and get the true facts.

SITUATION VACANT PRISON SERVICE

The MUFTI SQUAD

are looking for experienced goons with a flair for excessive violence. A fair wage with the POA. We work on a commission basis: 50p for a broken back, 10p for a broken leg. No strenuous mental exercise necessary, all you need is an extreme psychopathic nature and an elusive attitude in the witness box. Clothing provided and on-the-job training with ex SS stormtroopers. Must NOT have previous convictions, although this job may provide you with one or two.

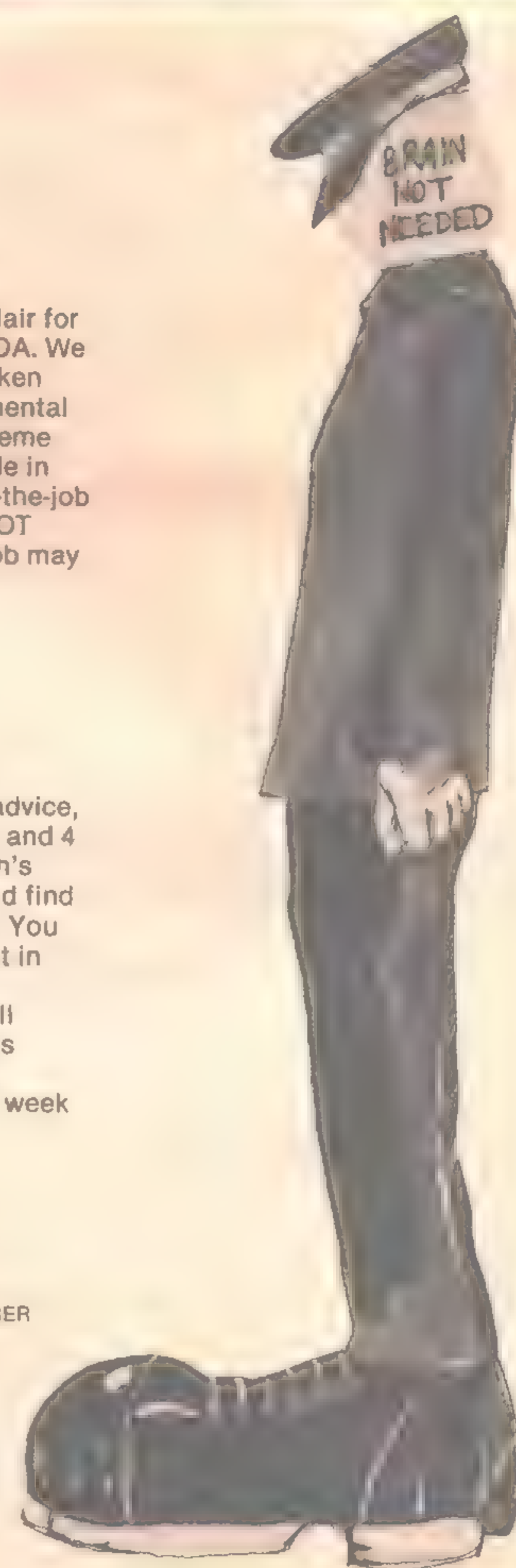
JOIN NOW BIG BOY!
MUFTI SLOGAN - KEEP KICKING

NEEDED NOW PRISON DOCTORS

EARN around £6,000 per annum with free stethoscope. You qualify for free medical advice, in case you don't know what you are doing and 4 free goons in white jackets after one month's trial. Learn the new NUT OFF technique and find out also that Mogadon puts people to sleep. You are required to sign the Official Secrets Act in case the public find out that you're an ex-butchers boy and you will be required to tell huge great lies in the witness box. Take this opportunity to louse up your future (and prisoners' health). You only work 3 hours a week as prisoners are never ill.

JOIN NOW - WE'RE NOT FUSSY

SITUATIONS VACANT WAS SENT TO US BY A PRISONER



FIGHT RACISM

British police are racist police!

This was the chant led by Asian youth at a 100 strong picket outside Kilburn police station on 31 May. The picket was called in protest against a massive immigration raid carried out by police at Bestways Cash and Carry in Victoria Road, NW10. This raid, which resulted in the arbitrary arrest of 20 Asians, reveals how immigration laws are used by the racist British police to harass and detain black people in a manner rapidly becoming indistinguishable from the pass raids carried out against black workers by the racist apartheid regime in South Africa.

Squad arrives with dogs

At about 11am on 13 May, a squad of plain clothes and uniformed police with dogs arrived at the Cash and Carry, shutting the main gate and sealing off all exits. Without explanation, police forced Asians working there into the office where they were interrogated. The racist bunch demanded to know how long people had been in Britain, whether they spoke English, and if not, why not, names and addresses and nationalities. People were not allowed to leave the room, even to go to the toilet. 20 people were then thrown into police vans and taken to Kilburn police station where they were interrogated again, searched and stripped of their belongings. They were then locked up in the cells for 4 hours – without food and water. At the end of this time, people were interrogated again, individually, this time with 12 plain clothes policemen in the room! The same

questions were asked. Police then accompanied people to their homes to seize and inspect passports, and then forced them to return to the police station where they were interrogated for a fourth time. Most of the people were then released without any charge, but, when they asked how they would get back to work – a distance of some miles – when they had no money with them, the police told people 'to walk'. As one of those arrested told FRFI: 'They treated us like animals. Police treatment of us was inhuman and brutal'. Of the 5 detained, 2 people have been deported and 2 are still being held in Heathrow detention centre.

Racist Police

This police attack on the Asian community, in an area where memories of the Grunwick strike are still bitter, has pulled aside even further the thin veil of British imperialist 'democracy' which is increasingly unable to hide its monstrous and racist face. Local Asian organisations, together with those arrested, led the picket outside Kilburn police station. The police while forbidding the use of a megaphone, could not prevent the shouting led off by the Asian youth *British police are racist police – British police OUT OUT OUT!*

Since this raid took place the police have launched an even bigger raid against West African workers at a factory in Edmonton, London. 40 police using dogs surrounded the factory with transit vans and forcibly detained 30 workers.

This is the largest swoop by the police and immigration authorities for several years. Only by building resistance can we fight Britain's 'pass laws' and the police terror which accompanies them.

RICHARD CAMPBELL

Readers of *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* will have read of the death of Richard Campbell, a 19-year-old black youth. Since the last issue further facts have become known showing the extent of the racist cover-up surrounding the cause of this death.

Richard Campbell was arrested in Brixton on 1 March and two days later was taken to Lewes Prison. On 10 March he was convicted, at Camberwell Magistrates Court of attempted burglary. When he stood up in court to protest his innocence declaring that the police had framed him, the racist court instructed him to be sent to Ashford Remand Centre to be examined for mental illness!

This vile and brutal act was the first effort of the racist courts and prisons to crush Richard Campbell's will to protest, to destroy his ability to stand up to the racist oppression black prisoners are subjected to. They subsequently drugged him with Largactil, with Stemetil and with Depixol. Within three weeks they had destroyed his health. When in Lewes prison, a fellow inmate testified that he was in good health, fit and had a good appetite. Yet within three weeks he had lost 18 lbs in weight and become so seriously ill that he had to be transferred to Ashford Hospital on 23 March. An independent pathologist for Mrs Campbell, Richard's mother, has said that Richard in his

condition required 24 hours' nursing monitored by a hospital if he was to live. Yet the prison authorities returned him to Ashford Remand Centre one day after he entered hospital – on 24 March! Within a week after his return, on 31 March, Richard Campbell was 'found dead in his cell'. What did the prison authorities do to Richard Campbell?

The cell in which Richard Campbell died has been completely sealed since his death and the Governor of Ashford has ordered the inmates of Ashford not to discuss Richard's death.

THANKS

The Earlington Family Defence Committee wishes to thank all those who have supported the campaign and made donations which enabled the cost of the campaign, legal costs and fines to be paid. We particularly thank;

AYM Bradford
Central London Medical ASTMS
Hammersmith Nalga
Islington Trades Council
Red Lion Setters
Christians against Racism and Fascism

And all those individuals and groups who have donated which are too numerous to mention.

WALTER RODNEY

Walter Rodney, who was murdered on Friday 13 June 1980, is a great loss to the international revolutionary movement. He died, aged 37, having achieved reknown as a scholar. His book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* led to a fuller understanding of imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism.

Walter Rodney was not content to remain an intellectual and historian, but was also a revolutionary. His political stand led to his expulsion both from Trinidad, by Dr Eric Williams, and from Jamaica by the Seaga government. For Rodney, the human suffering of famine, drought and malnutrition, the fact that no fresh milk can be bought in Guyana today, are not 'natural phenomena' but the direct result of the international imperialist system.

What Walter Rodney understood, and understood rightly, was that opportunism and petit bourgeois ideology are the main blocks on the development of the revolutionary masses of Africa, the Caribbean, North America and elsewhere. 'The petty bourgeoisie must be either pushed forward or further exposed' he said, and all his political activity was directed to this end. He attacked those who sheltered behind so-called independence movements but betrayed liberation struggles. 'The false anti-thesis between Pan-Africanism and Communism' must be destroyed and 'Pan-Africanism

must be an internationalist, anti-imperialist and Socialist weapon'.

The Working Peoples' Alliance of Guyana the party which he helped to found, and for which he died seeks to unify the working masses against the continued imperialist control of the state and the economy.

The ruling Guyanese party of Forbes-Burnham, the Peoples' National Congress, is populist in rhetoric, but servile to international capital in fact. Since nationalisation in Guyana, the state employs about 46% of the population, mostly in sugar and bauxite production. Nationalisation has merely simplified the control of the international banks and companies over the exploitation of the commodity markets. Although the PNC's capture of political office in 1964 was largely due to CIA interference and support, the government of Forbes-Burnham was launched under the constitutional and 'democratic' guise it had received from the British dominators when Guyana was granted independence in 1966. This facade of 'democracy' has been demolished with the rising militancy of the masses and total repression is now on the order of the day.

The murder of Walter Rodney has robbed the world of a leading anti-imperialist fighter. **Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!** salutes a great revolutionary and knows that the struggle he helped to build will continue until the imperialist powers and their lackeys are crushed by the liberation of the oppressed masses.

OLDHAM FIGHTS BACK

The last issue of *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* reported that supporters of the paper are involved in the Munir Ahmed Defence Committee, and the campaign to defend people arrested at the National Front demonstration in Oldham on 12 April.

Munir Ahmed is facing deportation for 'concealing a material fact' which in reality means not answering a question he was never asked. In between applying to join his father

and brother in Britain, and receiving his entry certificate, Munir got married. A natural enough thing for a 24 year old man to do, but not it appears, if you are black and want to come to live in Britain. In the eyes of British imperialism this is a crime punishable with deportation!

And it's not just Munir Ahmed facing deportation for 'concealing a material fact', thousands of nurses from the Philippines are being threatened because they are married, or had children before they came here. When they were recruited these details weren't asked, but now they are being used as the excuse to deport Filipino nurses.

Munir Ahmed's defence campaign is a vital link in the fight against British imperialism's immigration laws!

The Defence Committee, with *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* supporters playing an integral part, has organised door to door leafletting and petitioning in Asian districts of Oldham, a public meeting and a demonstration through the streets of Oldham.

Just as Munir Ahmed has experienced the realities of so-called British imperialist 'justice', the use of any legal means to harass and deport black people, so those fighting back against the forces of British imperialism are confronting the same upholder of 'justice'.

The trials of the Oldham defendants have up to now resulted in fines of up to £500, with only one person being fined less than £100! Of the 20 defendants tried only one has been acquitted, and he was ordered to pay £35 costs! An estimated £6000 is required to pay fines and costs; the most serious charges, possession of offensive weapons and police assault have yet to be heard.

Oldham Defence Fund
PO Box 72
Oldham OL1 4RT

Munir Ahmed Defence Committee
PO Box 72
Oldham OL1 4RT

HANDS OFF IRELAND



Hands Off Ireland demonstration, Luton

HANDS OFF IRELAND DEFENCE CAMPAIGN

In our last issue of *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* we reported on the nationwide police harassment of Hands Off Ireland and its supporters. Since April 1979 sixteen supporters have been arrested and Hands Off Ireland! street meetings broken up by the police in six towns across the country. The Hands Off Ireland Defence Campaign was set up to fight this political attack on the rights of the anti-imperialist movement to work in support of the Irish liberation struggle.

The first major activity of the campaign was a successful demonstration in Luton on Saturday 28th June. Luton was chosen because it was where Jim Reilly and Gerry MacLochlainn of PSF(Britain) were first held when arrested under the PTA (see separate report) and where four Hands Off Ireland supporters were arrested on 6 April whilst picketing the police station in protest.

Over 150 people attended with RCG contingents and supporters from Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield, Bristol, London and Luton itself. *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* which has also been subjected to police harassment was also represented by sizeable contingents. Cardiff University Troops Out Society was also present with a contingent as was Luton SWP.

The March, which was extremely militant and disciplined maintained a constant chant — End Police Censorship on Ireland! Defend Jim Reilly and Gerry MacLochlainn! Defend Hands Off Ireland! Drop the Charges Now! Smash the H-Blocks! Smash the PTA! As it marched through the city centre and through Irish and black districts it made a great impact as bystanders and Saturday shoppers took leaflets and contributed to the Hands Off Ireland Defence Fund (over £65 was collected). Outside Luton Police Station the demonstration stopped and was addressed by Jim Reilly who thanked Hands Off Ireland for its support and pointed out the need to build a campaign against police harassment.

Before a concluding rally at Moors Park, a minute's silence was observed in memory of Miriam Daly gunned down by agents of British imperialism. The rally opened with a message of

support from Gerry MacLochlainn. Speakers from Hands Off Ireland! and *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* emphasised the urgency of building a principled solidarity movement and pointed out that the British state feared the coming together of black and Irish people in a common struggle against British imperialism. They showed that *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* had also come under police attack for its anti-racist and anti-imperialist stand.

The demonstration was a success despite the complete failure of the petit bourgeois socialists to support it. Despite appeals from Hands Off Ireland! the IMG did not send a single person to the demonstration and the SWP only had one contingent, from Luton. This complete indifference to police attacks on anti-imperialists is only fitting for these groups. Whilst they have given space to an assortment of opportunists in their newspapers, whilst they are currently uniting with opportunists from the Communist and Labour Party and elements of the Liberal Party in the reactionary pro-imperialist Charter 80 campaign, they refused to print a single word about the anti-imperialist Hands Off Ireland Defence Campaign!

In sharp contrast to these forces of the past, the demonstration was attended by a sizeable contingent of black youth behind the *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* banners and a large contingent of young people from Luton. As the march passed through the city centre a group of working class youth joined it. The positive response of the black community and the working class youth to the march demonstrated the basis for building a powerful principled anti-imperialist movement within the most oppressed sections of the British working class.

DEFENCE FUND NEWS

The Hands Off Ireland Defence Campaign would like to thank all those comrades and supporters who have generously contributed to the defence fund set up to cover the costs of the campaign and the fines we are incurring as a result of police arrest of 16 of our supporters. In particular we would like to thank the Glasgow Indian Workers Association for their contribution and Manchester Women in Ireland.

The Defence Campaign still, however requires your support. The police have now

postponed yet another case, that of the four comrades arrested in Luton (see FRFI 4 and report of demonstration in this issue) to October. These constant delays are a great financial burden on our campaign. We would ask you therefore to continue supporting us financially. Contributions should be made to HOI Defence Campaign, 49 Railton Road, London SE24 0LN.

WE NEED YOUR HELP — PLEASE DONATE GENEROUSLY.

Message to Hands Off Ireland Defence Campaign March from Gerry MacLochlainn.

Comrades,

May I send you my greetings and support today and apologise for not being here in person. The Revolutionary Communist Group has a record second to none in its defence of Irish Republicanism and Irish Republicans, whether free or in prison. The attack on your organisation is the finest tribute the British State could pay you. As revolutionaries and supporters of the Irish liberation struggle you are hated and feared by British imperialism. I am confident you will prove that their fear is fear well founded.

Finally may I thank you for all the help you gave me during my incarceration. It was encouraging to know that I was not alone during that period.

Victory to the Irish Republican Movement! Brits out of Ireland!

Victory to the Revolutionary Communist Group!

Gerry MacLochlainn — Provisional Sinn Fein

ROBERT HARVEY NOT GUILTY

NOT GUILTY! That was the verdict in the trial of Glasgow HANDS OFF IRELAND supporter Robert Harvey. Robert Harvey was charged with 'behaviour liable to cause a breach of the peace' because he wore pro-republican badges and a black beret.

The prosecution made a great deal out of Robert Harvey's black beret. This they said, linked him to the IRA to 'maiming' and 'murder' etc. etc.

Robert Harvey's defence was straightforward. The charge was a direct attack on his democratic right to publicly express a political viewpoint.

In the end the pressure generated as a result of the HANDS OFF IRELAND DEFENCE CAMPAIGN, which included a picket of the court, a public meeting, street meetings, the distribution of thousands of leaflets and numerous press releases was enough to focus attention onto this political trial and secure a not guilty verdict.

This victory follows close on the heels of another case where a HANDS OFF IRELAND supporter, charged with assault, had his charges dropped by the Glasgow police after a successful picket of the police station.

Mike Hill

HANDS OFF IRELAND!

No10

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BAIL WON FOR LUTON 2

Jim Reilly and Gerry MacLochlainn were finally released on bail of two £5,000 sureties for each man. Their freedom represents a major triumph over the racist anti-Irish Prevention of Terrorism Act. This Act allows the police to arrest and hold people for eight days without any evidence or charge, without any legal advice or contact with the outside world, and in an atmosphere of intimidation and anti-Irish prejudice. The charges which followed, in this case, conspiring to cause explosions, are then so much easier to use to imprison people without any evidence. The bourgeois press reports ensure that a conspiracy of silence surrounds the reality of the imperialist justice and the mistreatment of the remand prisoners.

The release of Jim and Gerry therefore is a victory. It is the first time prisoners have been released on bail whilst facing these charges. The pickets which dogged every move of the police and prisons in shifting Jim and Gerry around from place to place broke through the wall of silence and exposed the use of the PTA and conspiracy charges against Irish political activists. Hands Off Ireland supporters played a major role in achieving this victory by their work on all these pickets. Yet it is clear that anti-imperialist have a great deal to do to build on this victory and to smash the PTA once and for all.

The Luton based Defence Committee Against the PTA will continue this work, in particular the battle to force the dropping of the charges against Jim and Gerry. 45 people attended the Defence Committee's public meeting on 19 June in Luton. Jim and Gerry spoke of their experiences in detention and pledged as did the RCG Hands Off Ireland speaker to continue the fight against the PTA in this country and for the defeat of British imperialism in Ireland.

HANDS OFF IRELAND

MARIAN PRICE FREED

After more than six years in prison Marian Price was released from Armagh Prison at the end of April. The British government said that she was being released 'on compassionate grounds' because she was dangerously ill. She was said to be suffering from 'anorexia nervosa' with associated psychological problems. Her release was therefore presented by the British government—and duly reported by the media—as an illustration of its 'humane' attitude towards Republican prisoners. What was not reported was the fact that Marian's condition was a direct result of the torture inflicted on her while in prison.

After she was sent to prison in England in 1973, she and her sister Dolours, together with six of their comrades who had been sent to prison at the same time, immediately went on hunger strike in support of their demands for political status and for a transfer to a prison in the North of Ireland. For nearly six months during the hunger strike Marian, Dolours, Hugh Feeney and Gerry Kelly were daily subjected to the torture of being forcibly fed.

This process (which later killed another republican prisoner, Michael Gaughan, in Albany Prison) involved the prisoners being held down by warders while their mouths were forced open by a wooden clamp and a plastic tube thrust down their throats into their stomachs. A mixture of liquid food was then poured down the tube into their stomachs. This process invariably caused the prisoners to vomit but when this happened the vomit was poured back down the tube into their stomachs. Marian described this torture in a letter to her mother on New Year's Day, 1974:

'Yesterday I was sick again while the tube was still down. The doctor doing it would not take

his hand away from my mouth and I thought I was choking in my own vomit. It was horrible. However when I related what happened to the doctor he said and I quote, "Yes, quite, don't puke and you won't choke". The very same thing happened today but I managed to shake my head free and puke into a basin'.

It was this torture which led to Marian's aversion to food and her health has steadily deteriorated ever since.

Recently, however, her condition became significantly worse, probably mainly due to the increasing pressure being exerted on the special category prisoners in Armagh by the prison authorities. At the time of her release Marian was one of only four prisoners in Armagh to have special category status and in recent months increasing efforts have been made to force these prisoners to give up the rights associated with special category status and hence in effect to withdraw political status from them.

The prison authorities have simultaneously launched an attack on those prisoners in Armagh who are protesting in support of their demand for political status: as a result conditions in 'A' Wing of the prison, where the protesting prisoners are being held, have now become as bad as those in the H-Blocks. The British government, however, faced with mounting protests about its treatment of Republican prisoners, has now clearly realised that it is in its interests to try to cover up its brutality with at least a veneer of 'humanitarianism'—hence the recent talks between Humphrey Atkins and Cardinal O'Fiaich, the offering of a few insignificant concessions to the men in the H-Blocks, and the recent letter sent by the Northern Ireland Office to the relatives of protesting prisoners expressing the government's concern about the health and welfare of the prisoners.

The release of Marian Price at this time was designed not only to ensure that she did not die in prison (which would obviously have further damaged the reputation of the British government in relation to its treatment of prisoners) but also to distract public attention from the worsening conditions of the protesting prisoners in Armagh. Far from being an act of 'humanity' and 'compassion', therefore, the decision to release Marian Price must be seen as simply another cynical attempt by the British government—exploiting a situation which was itself brought about by British torture—to cover up its continuing brutal treatment of Republican prisoners-of-war.

IRSP AQUITTALS

On May 22nd the Court of Appeal in the South of Ireland finally upheld the appeal of Osgur Breathnach and Brian McNally, both members of the IRSP, against their convictions for the Sallins mail train robbery in 1976 on the grounds that their 'confessions' (the only 'evidence' against them) had been extracted by force. The conviction of Nicky Kelly, the third member of the IRSP to be convicted for the robbery, will now presumably also be overturned on the same grounds (Kelly fled to the United States after his conviction but has now returned to Ireland to lodge an appeal in the light of the Court of Appeal's decision in relation to Breathnach and McNally).

The Court of Appeal in fact had little alternative but to release Breathnach and McNally. It had long been widely accepted that the IRSP men had been the victims of a blatant frame-up by the police in collaboration with the Special Criminal Court, and this was put

beyond any doubt by the recent IRA statement confirming that it had carried out the robbery. The Court of Appeal therefore had no choice but to uphold the appeal if it was not to sacrifice its own credibility completely and thus further undermine the credibility of the entire system. Its decision, however, necessarily left the police exposed as torturers and furthermore highlighted the role played by the Special Criminal Court in condoning such torture.

The train robbery case, in fact, more than any other has demonstrated how similar the process of 'legalised repression' in the South of Ireland has become to that in the North. The original conviction of the IRSP men was part of a concerted effort by the state to destroy the IRSP by the same means as those perfected in the North of Ireland: continuous harassment and arrests, the use of torture to extract 'confessions', and the subsequent processing of political activists through the courts and into the prisons. The mistake made by the police in forcing the three IRSP men to 'confess' to the mail train robbery, however, was to attempt such a crude and blatant frame-up in a case which was bound to attract wide publicity. The



Committee to Support Olive McKeon: Demonstration outside Daily News Offices, New York

USA: ANTI IRISH ATTACK

The recent case of Olive McKeon demonstrates the Carter government's willingness to service British colonial policy by repressing Irish-American opposition to British rule in Ireland.

The scenario unfolded with US law enforcement agencies acting out a series of raids for arms. Working upon information supplied by the British, federal agents proceeded with arrests in the New York area. Those actually arrested are identified as organized criminals, but the federal government, through its grand jury in New York was determined to implicate Irish militants. It selected Barney and Olive McKeon.

On 5 November 1979 Barney McKeon was subpoenaed to testify before the grand jury in New York. Mr McKeon was subpoenaed to provide handwriting samples, finger and palm prints. Standing on his civil and constitutional rights, Mr McKeon refused. He was jailed in contempt on 12 December 1979. Throughout his incarceration of four months, during which his health suffered, Barney McKeon firmly resisted the coercive efforts of the grand jury.

Imprisonment failed to coerce Mr McKeon, so within days of his release, the grand jury targetted Olive McKeon who was subpoenaed and jailed for likewise refusing to submit handwriting samples and fingerprints.

On the second day of her imprisonment, Mrs McKeon, afflicted with a heart condition, suffered a collapse. Prison doctors sent her back to her cell. Despite her severely strained health, Mrs McKeon defied the grand jury, for

which she spent 60 days in jail. She was never accused of any crime, she was held without bail or trial.

Recognizing the persecution of the McKeons to be a test case of the Irish-American community's ability to defend its political rights, the Irish Northern Aid Committee and the Ancient Order of Hibernians formed the Ad Hoc Committee in Support of Olive McKeon and began a vocal, principled campaign to win her freedom.

On 12 April many hundreds of Irish-Americans demonstrated their support for Mrs McKeon in front of Carter-Mondale campaign headquarters in New York City.

The sycophantically pro-British New York Daily News ignored the impressive demonstration. The Daily News was chosen as the target for the next demonstration on 10 May. This was even bigger than the first, clearly showing Irish-Americans' refusal to be intimidated by British-inspired press lies. On the eve of the demonstration Olive McKeon was released.

Mrs McKeon's heart ailment had rapidly deteriorated during the last week of her imprisonment and her life was seriously endangered when she was left unconscious for several hours. For this reason Mrs McKeon finally provided the handwriting samples and fingerprints. Carter's campaign to defend British imperialism by censoring and intimidating Irish-Americans had met a serious challenge. The successful campaign for Olive McKeon is a warning to the Carter administration.

American correspondent

Special Criminal Court then compounded this mistake by condoning (and, more important, being seen to condone) the torture and frame-up of the IRSP men by ignoring or rejecting the clear medical evidence that the men had been tortured: it thereby undermined the credibility of the entire system.

The mistake made by the judges of the Special Criminal Court in allowing themselves to be seen to condone torture in a case attracting international publicity is a mistake which is rarely made by their more experienced counterparts in the North of Ireland. The more astute approach of the Northern judges is well illustrated by the recent acquittal of Eddie Brophy, who had been charged with the La Mon bombing, on the grounds that his 'confession' had been extracted from him by force. This decision, of course, left the RUC once more exposed as torturers, but it was the incompetence of the RUC in covering up the torture, not the torture itself, which attracted the criticisms of the judge and led to the acquittal. The stumbling performance in the witness box of the policemen who had carried out the interrogation of Brophy would have sufficed for a routine case in the special courts. This case, however, had attracted considerable publicity so the judge clearly considered that his

own interests and the interests of the system as a whole would be best served if he excluded himself from this particular frame-up, even at the necessary expense of leaving the police exposed as torturers.

Like the release of the IRSP men in the South the acquittal of Brophy was not intended as a condemnation of the system of 'legalised repression' but to safeguard it from damaging publicity so that it could continue unaffected in the future. As if to emphasise this, no action has been taken against any of the policemen exposed as torturers in the two cases: the implication of the decisions in both cases is therefore simply that the police should cover up such torture rather more efficiently in future. It is clear that the RUC at least have quickly learned their lesson. When they recently arrested and charged a second man in connection with the La Mon bombing one of the most senior and experienced interrogators in the RUC was assigned to take charge of the interrogation. His task was to ensure that this time the torture used to extract the required 'confession' would be sufficiently covered up that the trial judge would be able to fulfil his allotted role of consigning the defendant to the H-Blocks of Long Kesh without attracting undue adverse publicity.

THE IRISH PEOPLE

HANDS OFF IRELAND

ARMAGH conditions worsen

British imperialism knows no limit to the brutality it will inflict on Irish prisoners of war. The prisoners, both in the Hell Blocks of Long Kesh and in Armagh gaol, are fighting for prisoner of war status. When we see what they are prepared to endure in that struggle it is a message to anti-imperialists in Britain to build solidarity with the Republican movement and the war of liberation it is fighting both inside and outside the prisons. The following report is reprinted from An Phoblacht/Republican News 28 June 1980.

Latest communications from 'A' wing, Armagh jail, where thirty women have been on 'no wash, no co-operation' protest for fifteen weeks, suggest that the already severe conditions are now reaching the point where an outbreak of serious ill-health is a strong possibility, and point out that the campaign by male and female warders of petty harassment continues unchecked.

The protesting prisoners are still on twenty-three hour daily lock-up, their bodies and hair caked with dirt and sweat, their skin now a dirty grey colour because of lack of fresh air and sunlight in their cells, which have had windows deliberately blocked up by the prison authorities. And poor and inadequate food has resulted in many of the women suffering serious weight loss.

In spite of this, the women's determination and morale is reported to be very high. Alarming, however, latest reports indicate that conditions in the prison are rapidly deteriorating. Within the last week there has been an

outbreak of fleas in some of the cells, and maggots have become a common sight. On top of this the refusal – despite repeated requests from the women – to turn on heating in the cells means they are forced to wrap flea-ridden blankets round themselves to keep warm.

The quantity and quality of food, which has been continually used as a weapon by the prison authorities to sap the women's enthusiasm for the protest, has deteriorated yet further, the women report that they are constantly hungry.

And though there have not been, in recent weeks, much of the savage beatings experienced in the early days of the protest, pushing and shoving by male and female screws, along with verbal abuse, is very much the order of the day – a situation designed, the women believe, to heighten even further, the tension and friction in the prison.

However, despite worsening conditions and Atkins' arrogant assertion earlier in the week that political status will continue to be denied to Republican prisoners, the Armagh protestors are confident: 'Victory will be ours!'

CHARTER 80

SCABS CHARTER

The heroic struggle of Irish political prisoners for prisoner of war status has been going on now for four years. The longer it lasts the closer it comes to the point where prisoners will die. Everyone knows that this will lead to an explosion, an immense intensification of the liberation war. It is this fact that explains the appearance of the latest 'prisoner' campaign of the petit bourgeois left, Charter 80, launched by the SWP – and the recent call by the NEC of the Labour Party for an inquiry into prison conditions and an amelioration of those conditions. The petit bourgeois left and the Labour Party are terrified of the prospect of an intensification of the liberation war. Their response, however, is not to rally behind the demand for POW status but to attempt to persuade imperialism to make concessions in order to avoid defeat in Ireland.

At this critical stage in the struggle the SWP produce Charter 80. This campaign has five demands which amount to a plea for more humane conditions. There is no opposition to imperialism here only the demand that it be less brutal. The SWP choose to forget that the prisoners are not fighting for 'humane'

conditions – they could have got these four years ago if they were prepared to give up their struggle. The prisoners are fighting, and risking their lives, to be recognised as what they are: prisoners of war. Their fight is an integral part of the war of national liberation. This the Charter 80 campaign seeks to deny. The obvious association of this campaign with the anti-Soviet pro-imperialist Charter 77 is an insult to Irish revolutionaries who have taken up the armed struggle against British imperialism. But there is a method in this 'forgetfulness' and these insults.

A look at the list of supporters of Charter 80 reveals what this method is. The backers include Gordon McLennan (CPGB), Paul Foot (SWP), Tariq Ali (IMG) and a host of Labour Party hypocrites. All of these individuals and organisations have refused to lift a finger in support of the demand for POW status. All of them slander the armed struggle – which the prisoners are part of – and all of them supported the Labour Party in the last general election. They are united under the banner of Charter 80 because they are united in their fear of the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed and united in their desire to protect the Labour Party from exposure at the hands of the oppressed. For this reason the demands of Charter 80 are tailored to suit the racist pro-imperialist Labour Party.

That the Labour Party, which set up the H-Blocks and intensified the terror campaign

MIRIAM DALY

The Revolutionary Communist Group was shocked and saddened to learn of the murder of Miriam Daly. This murder is clearly another effort by pro-imperialist elements to intimidate and destroy the forces of national liberation in Ireland. Miriam Daly has given her life to the struggle for Irish national liberation.

Miriam Daly was long an active and leading participant in the liberation movement, a tireless campaigner for the Irish people. She was a major figure in the formation of the Irish Republican Socialist Party when it became clear to her and others that the 'official' Republican movement had degenerated into a treacherous pro-imperialist rump. Ever since then

she has been a fighter for the cause of a socialist republic of Ireland.

The Revolutionary Communist Group salutes Miriam Daly as a revolutionary fighter brutally gunned down by the agents of British imperialism. We send our sympathy and condolences to all her relatives, friends and supporters. We remain convinced that no amount of murder, torture and terror will halt the forward march of the Irish people to national liberation – the cause for which Miriam Daly has given her life.

Victory to the Irish people!

Executive Committee of the
Revolutionary Communist Group.

ONE MORE IRISH POW

The trial of Brian Keenan ended at on Wednesday 25 June. Brian Keenan was sentenced to 18 years of imprisonment – nearly two decades in jail. Eighteen years during which he will face the same barbarous regime as the other 80 Irish Prisoners of War held in English prisons – a regime of solitary confinement, of arbitrary punishment, of regular beatings, of harassment of visitors, of sabotage of visits, of constant transfer from one prison to another and countless other forms of oppression.

Brian Keenan's trial, preceded by the usual anti-Irish imperialist propaganda was yet another example of the 'justice' that is meted out to Irish prisoners by British police and courts. The prosecution felt it unnecessary to offer more than a minimum of evidence. And indeed it did not need to! As is now normal the jury was vetted by the police. Once in court, whatever the evidence, Brian Keenan's conviction was a foregone conclusion. One more Irish POW pushed through an imperialist court and sentenced to 18 years. British imperialism was

determined to jail Brian Keenan and it did so with the minimum of legal formality.

Alongside the police and the courts, the imperialist press, this wretched and hypocritical agent of imperialist propaganda played its role in ensuring that no one questioned the court proceedings. The press, in so far as it carried any reports bowed to the wishes of its masters. It reported only the prosecution case. What the defence had to say was of no interest to the imperialist press. Such is the 'unbiased' and 'objective' character of the press in service to the war against the Irish people.

The array of police, court, vetted jury, and hatchet-men of the press succeeded in their predetermined aim – to jail Brian Keenan.

This however is not the end of the matter. Since the trial, the press has mounted a vicious anti-Irish Republican campaign using the most lurid publicity: *Crossword clue to the architect of carnage* is one example. The campaign is no mere gutter press sensationalism. It is part of a more serious exercise. This whipping up of anti-Irish sentiment, and connecting Brian Keenan's case to those arrested and charged under the PTA in December 1979, is designed to ensure that their conviction too will be a foregone conclusion.

against the Irish people, now finds it necessary to raise the prisoner issue should not deceive us. The NEC is not calling for POW status – the very issue at the centre of the struggle – but concessions from imperialism with the aim of defusing the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed. This is made clear in the NEC's condemnation of the armed struggle and the cause which the prisoners are in prison for:

'The NEC is implacably opposed to the programme and methods of terrorism'

In their efforts, the Labour Party is fully supported by the petit bourgeois left in the guise of Charter 80. In *Socialist Worker* 21 June 1980, the SWP makes it clear that there is no difference of intention between them and the Labour Party. Their 'criticism' is that the Labour Party, unlike the SWP, will not fight for this reactionary opportunist standpoint:

'we can have few illusions in the Labour Party's willingness to do anything worthwhile about the H-Blocks'.

They all support the same pro-imperialist standpoint but the petit bourgeois left will do all

the donkey work on behalf of the Labour Party. They do not call on the NEC to demand POW status. We say let the NEC demand POW status now if it wants to convince anyone that it really supports the prisoners'!

We have repeatedly stated that there are only two sides in the Irish war: the side of the Irish people or the side of British imperialism. Once again the British petit bourgeois left in alliance with the Labour Party is seeking to dupe people into believing that there is a middle way, that imperialism can be reformed, that violent destruction of imperialism can be avoided. As the prisoners are forced ever closer to death, ever closer to the desperate remedy of hunger strike, in their battle for POW status, we must be clear: anyone in Britain who calls for anything less than the immediate recognition of POW status for all Irish political prisoners is a traitor to the prisoners, a traitor to the Irish people and a traitor to the anti-imperialist and working class movement in Britain.

Terry Marlowe

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